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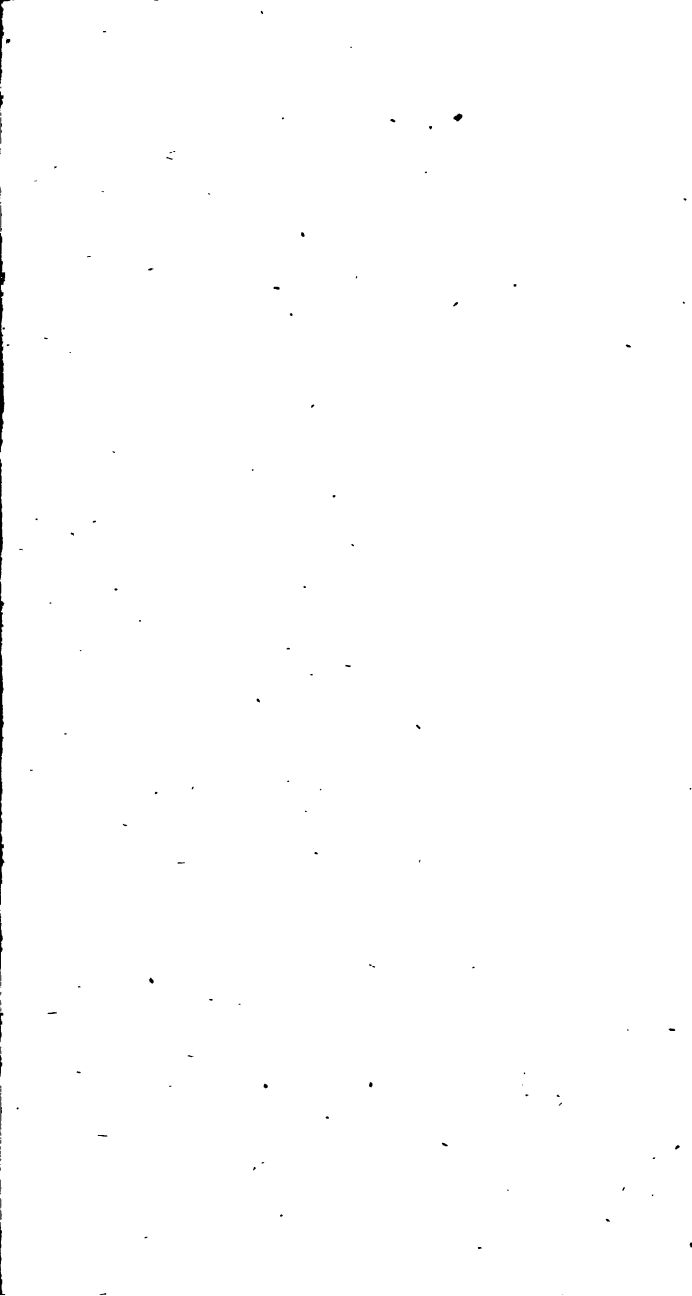


B E L L' s

BRITISH THEATRE.

VOLUME THE SEVENTH.





Bell's
BRITISH THEATRE ;
TRAGEDIES .



Mortimer del.

Hall Sculp.

L O N D O N
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BRITISH THEATRE,

Consisting of the most esteemed

ENGLISH PLAYS.

VOLUME THE SEVENTH.

Being the Fourth VOLUME of TRAGEDIES.

CONTAINING

**The ROYAL CONVERT, by N. ROWE, Esq.
ALEXANDER THE GREAT, by N. LEE, Gent.
MAHOMET, by the Rev. Mr. MILLER.
THEODOSIUS, by N. LEE, Gent.
LADY JANE GRAY, by N. ROWE, Esq.**

L O N D O N :

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M^{rs} WARD in the Character of **RODOGUNE**.

—Ye Gods!— 'tis he himself—

Bell's Characteristical Edition.

THE ROYAL CONVERT.

A TRAGEDY. BY NICHOLAS ROWE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL COVENT-GARDEN.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book, by permission of the Managers,

BY MR. THOMAS PROMPTER.

CHARACTERISTICS.

The' my date—Of mortal life be short It shall be glorious—Each minute shall be rich in some great action—To speak the king, the hero, and the lover—There never was a medley of such thinking—Ambition, hatred, mischief, and revenge—Gather like clouds on clouds; and then anon—Love, like a golden beam of light, shoots thro'—Smiles on the gloom, and my heart bounds with pleasure.

HENGIST.

How shall I teach my tongue to frame a language—Different from my heart—My heart was made—Simple and plain, and fraught with artless tenderness—Form'd to receive one love, and only one—It knows not what there can be in variety—And would not if it could—'Tis much beneath my courage and my truth—To borrow any mean disguise from falsehood—I dare die—But dare not be oblig'd. I dare not owe—What I can never render back—To defend—My honour and my love from violation—O'er ev'ry bar resolute will I rush—And in despite of proud tyrannick Foes—Seize and assert my right.

ARIBERT.

I will not think he meant it—Revenge had else been swift—So high I hold—The honour of a soldier and a king—I won't think your master meant to wrong me—Let him beware however—What in a foe I pardon or despise—Is deadly from a friend, and so to be repaid—'Tis much beneath me—To ask again the debt you owe to honour—But mark me Hengist—I am not us'd to wait; and if this day—Pass unregarded as the former two—Soon as to-morrow dawns expect me—Arm'd in the field—Tho' I could wish it otherwise—Believe me I would still be found thy friend.

OFFA.

I would preserve 'em both the royal brothers—But if their Fates ordain that one must fall—Then let my master stand. This Christian woman—Ay, there the mischief comes—Were she but well remov'd—Would 't were done—And my head safe—That! let me look to that.

SEOFRID.

Bred to my country's manners—I worship as my fathers did before me—Unpractic'd in disputes and wrangling schools—I seek no farther knowledge, and so keep—My mind at peace, nor know the pain of doubting—What others think I judge not of too nicely—But hold all honest men are in the right.

OSWALD.

Whate'er I am—Is of myself, by native worth exsiling—My fierce haughty soul—Whate'er she suffers still disdains to bend—How is she form'd, this rival of my love—To make her shine beyond me—Her mind! Ye Gods! which of you all—Could make that great, and fit to rival mine—Has she a soul—Can dare like mine—Oh no! she cannot, nature cannot bear it—It sinks ev'n me; the torrent drives me down—The native greatness of my spirit falls—I will find her—For whom I am despis'd—Look that she be your masterpiece ye Gods!—My jealous rage to move—A victim worthy my offended love—I feel my soul impatient of this bondage—Disdaining this unworthy idle passion—And struggling to be free. Now, now it shoots—It tow'rs upon the wing to crowns and empire—Thou native greatness of my soul befriend me.

RODOGUNE.

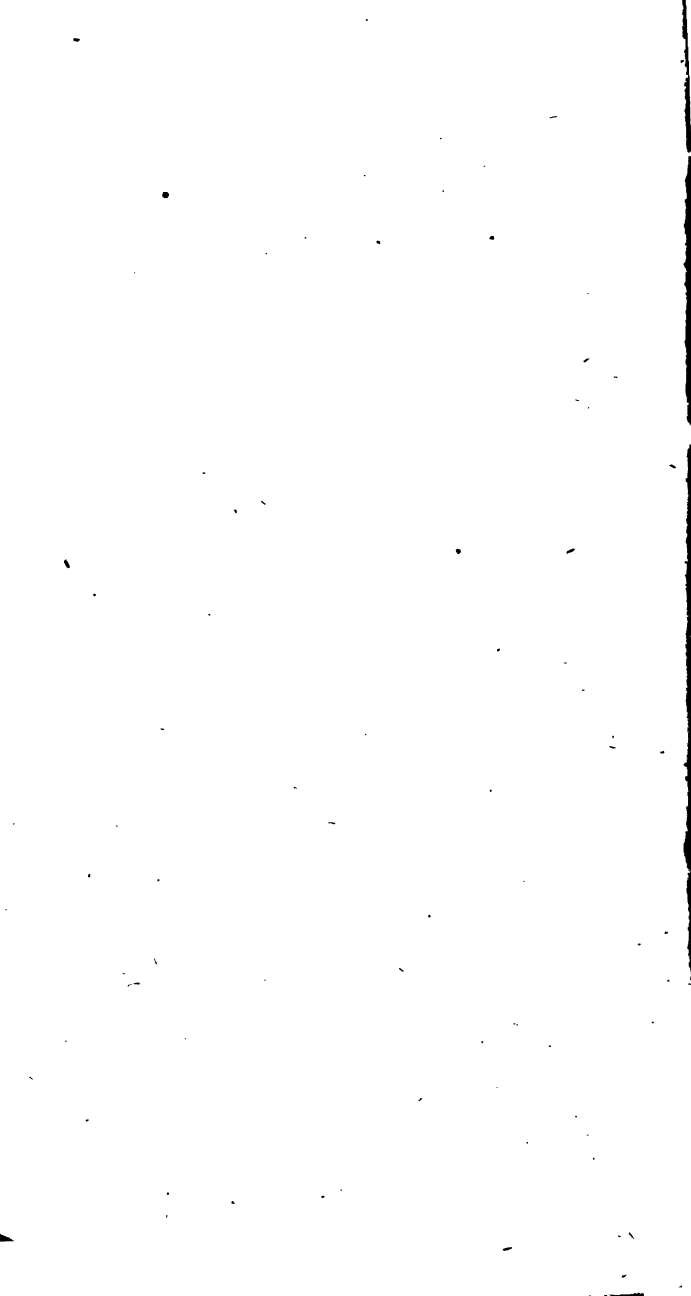
Oh! save me from pollution—Let me know—All miseries beside, each kind of sorrow—And prove me with variety of pains—Whips, racks, and flames, for I was born to suffer—I am arm'd, and equal to the combat.

ETHELINDA.



EDINBURG:

At the Apollo Press, by THE MARTINS, for Bell, LONDON, 1782.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
CHARLES LORD HALIFAX.

MY LORD,

IF I could have the vanity to make a merit of dedicating this Tragedy, I should here take an opportunity of telling you that I am in this endeavouring to make the best and only return I am capable of for all those marks of exceeding goodness and humanity which I have still had the honour to meet with from your Lordship : but since the matter is quite otherwise, since it is highly to my advantage to shelter myself under so great a name, since I have done myself so much honour by it, I am bound to own, with all the gratitude I am capable of, that your Lordship's patronage is a new and will be a lasting obligation upon me.

Most kinds of poetry, but especially tragedies, come into the world now like children born under ill stars; a general indifference, or rather disinclination, attends like a bad influence upon 'em, and after having buffled thro' ill usage and a short life they sleep and are forgotten. The relish of things of this kind is certainly very much altered from what it was some time since; and though I will not presume to censure other people's pleasures, and prescribe to the various tastes of mankind, yet I will take the liberty to say, that those who scorn to be entertained like their forefathers will hardly substitute so reasonable a diversion in the room of that which they have laid aside. I could wish there were not so much reason as there is to attribute this change of inclinations to a disesteem of learn-

ing itself. Too many people are apt to think that books are not necessary to the finishing the character of a fine gentleman, and are therefore easily drawn to despise what they know nothing of. But, my Lord, among all these mortifying thoughts it is still a pleasure to the Muses to think that there are some men of too delicate understandings to give into the tastes of a depraved age, men that have not only the power but the will to protect those arts which they love, because they are masters of 'em.

It would be very easy for me to distinguish one among those few after the most advantageous manner, but all men of common sense have concurred in doing it already, and there is no need of a panegyrick.

I could be almost tempted to expostulate with the rest of the world (for I am sure there is no occasion to make an apology to your Lordship) in defence of poetry. I am far from thinking of a good poet as the Stoicks did of their wise man, that he was sufficient for every thing, could be every thing, and excel in every thing, as he pleased; yet sure I may be allowed to say that that brightness, quickness, that strength and greatness of thinking, which is required in any of the nobler kinds of poetry would raise a man to an uncommon distinction in any profession or business that has a relation to good sense and understanding. One modern instance can at least be given where the same genius that shone in poetry was found equal to the first employments of the state, and where the same man who by his virtue and wisdom was highly useful to and instrumental in the safety and happiness of his native country had been equally ornamental to it in his wit.

This is what I could not help saying for the honour of an art which has been formerly the favourite of the greatest men; not that it wants a recommendation to your Lordship, who have always been a constant and generous protector of it. This indeed would be much more properly said to the world, and when I have told them what men have equally adorned it and been adorned by it, I might not unfitly apply to them what Horace said to the Pisos,

———*Ne fortè Pudori*
Sit tibi Musa Lyra solers & Cantor Apollo.

DEDICATION.

For my own inconsiderable pretensions to verse I shall,
I confess, think better even of them than I have ever yet
done if they shall afford me the honour to be always thought,

My Lord,

your Lordship's most obedient

and devoted humble servant,

N. ROWE.

A iij



PROLOGUE.

*SINCE to your fam'd forefathers quite contrary
 You from their pleasures as their wisdom vary,
 What art what method shall the poet find
 To hit the taste of each fantastick mind?
 Legions of joys your wand'ring fancies lead;
 Like summer flies which in the shambles breed
 Each year they swarm anew, and to the last succeed.
 Time was when fools by fellowship were known,
 But now they stray, and in this populous Town
 Each coxcomb has a folly of his own.
 Some dress, some dance, some play, not to forget
 Your piquet parties and your dear basset:
 Some praise, some rail, some bow, and some make faces,
 Your country squires hunt foxes, your court places.
 The city too fills up the various scene,
 Where fools lay wagers and where wise men win.
 One rails at Cælia for a late mischance,
 One grumbles and cries up the pow'r of France;
 This man talks politicks and that takes pills,
 One cures his own, and one the nation's ills.
 Now fiddling and the charms of singsong win ye,
 Harmonious Peg and warbling Valentini.
 As to your drinking—but for that we spare it,
 Nor with your other vile delights compare it;
 There's something more than sound, there's sense, in claret.
 Mean-while neglected verse, in long disgrace,
 Amongst your many pleasures finds no place;
 The virtuous laws of common sense forswearing;
 You damn us, like pack'd juries, without bearing.
 Each puny whiffler here is wit enough,
 With scornful airs and supercilious snuff,
 To cry, This Tragedy's such damn'd grave stuff
 But now we hope more equal judges come,
 Since Flanders sends the gen'rous warriors home.
 You that have fought for liberty and laws,
 Whose valour the proud Gallick tyrant awes,
 Join to assert the sinking Muses' cause;
 Since the same flame, by diff'rent ways express,
 Glows in the hero's and the poet's breast,
 The same great thoughts that rouse you to the fight
 Inspire the Muse and bid the poet write.*

Dramatis Personae.

MEN.

Covent-Garden.

HENGIST , king of Kent, son to Hengist the first Saxon invader of Britain,	}	Mr. Wroughton.
ARIBERT , his brother,		Mr. Lewis.
OFFA , a Saxon prince,		Mr. Whitfield.
SEOFRID , first minister and favourite to the king,	}	Mr. Hull.
OSWALD , friend to Aribert,		Mr. Robson.

WOMEN.

RODOGUNE , a Saxon princess, sister to Offa, betrothed to the king,	}	Mrs. Ward.
ETHELINDA , a British lady, privately married to Aribert,		Mrs. Hartley.

Priests, Officers, Soldiers, and other Attendants.

SCENE IN KENT, about twenty years after the first invasion of Britain by the Saxons.

THE ROYAL CONVERT*.

ACT I.

SCENE, a palace.

Enter ARIBERT *and* OSWALD.

ARIBERT.

SUCH are, my friend, the joys our loves have known,
So still to be desir'd, so ever new,
Nor by fruition pall'd nor chang'd by absence.
Whate'er the poets dreamt of their Elysium,
Or what the saints believe of the first paradise,
"When nature was not yet deform'd by winter,
"But one perpetual beauty crown'd the year,"
Such have we found 'em still, still, "still," the same.

Osw. Such grant, kind Heav'n! their course to be for
But yet, my Prince, forgive your faithful Oswald [ever!
If he believes you melt with too much tenderness;
Your noble heart forgets its native greatness,
And sinks in softness when you languish thus,
Thus sigh and murmur but for six days absence.

Arib. Chidenot, but think if'er, "when thou wert young,"
Thou lov'dst thyself, how thou wert won't to judge
Of time, of love, of absence, and impatience.
What! six long days, and never write nor send!
Tho' Adelmar and Kenwald, faithful both,
Were left behind to bring me tidings from her.
How, Ethelinda! how hast thou forgot me!

Osw. Perhaps I err; but if the pain be such,

* The lines distinguished by inverted commas are omitted in the representation, and those printed in Italicks are the additions of the Theatre.

Why is the fair one who alone can ease it
Thus far divided from your longing arms?
'Twere better ne'er to part than thus to mourn.

Arib. Oh Oswald! is there not a fatal cause?
Thou know'st my Ethelinda——

Osw. Is a Christian,
A name by Saxons and their gods abhorr'd.
To me her diff'ring faith imports not much;
'Tis true indeed bred to my country's manners
I worship as my fathers did before me;
Unpractis'd in disputes and wrangling schools
I seek no farther knowledge, and so keep
My mind at peace, nor know the pain of doubting:
What others think I judge not of too nicely,
But hold all honest men are in the right.

Arib. Then know yet more, for my whole breast is thine,
Ev'n all my secret soul: I am a Christian.
'Tis wonderful to tell, for oh, my Oswald!
I listen'd to the charmer of my heart.
Still as the night that fled away I sat,
I heard her with an eloquence divine
Reason of holy and mysterious truths,
Of Heav'n's most righteous doom, of man's injustice,
Of laws to curb the will and bind the passions,
Of life, and death, and immortality,
"Of gnashing fiends beneath and pains eternal,
"Of starry thrones and endless joys above."
My very soul was aw'd, was shook within me;
Methought I heard distinct, I saw most plain,
Some angel in my Ethelinda's form
Point out my way to everlasting happiness.

Osw. 'Tis wonderful indeed! and yet great souls,
By nature half divine, soar to the stars,
And hold a near acquaintance with the gods.
And oh! my Prince, when I survey thy virtue
I own the seal of Heav'n imprinted on thee;
I stand convinc'd that good and holy pow'rs
Inspire and take delight to dwell within thee:
Yet crowds will still believe and priests will teach
As wand'ring fancy and as int'rest lead.
How will the King and our fierce Saxon chiefs

Approve this bride and faith? Had royal Hengist
Thy father liv'd——

Arib. 'Tis on that rock we perish;
Thou bring'st his dreadful image to my thoughts,
And now he stands before me stormy, fierce,
Imperious, unrelenting, and to death
Tenacious of his purpose once resolv'd.
Just such he seems as when severe and frowning
He forc'd the King my brother and myself
To kneel and swear at Woden's cruel altar
First never to forego our country's gods,
Then made us vow with deepest imprecations
If it were either's fortune e'er to wed
Never to chuse a wife among the Christians.

Osw. Have you not fail'd in both?

Arib. 'Tis true I have,
But for a cause so just, so worthy of me,
That not to 'ave fail'd in both had been to 'ave fail'd.
Yes, Oswald, by the conscious judge within
So do I stand acquitted to myself,
That were my Ethelinda free from dangers,
On peril of my life I would make known
And to the world avow my love and faith.

Osw. I dare not, nay 't is sure I cannot, blame you;
"You are the secret worship of my soul,
"To me so perfect that you cannot err."
But oh! my Prince, let me conjure you now
By that most faithful service I 'ave still paid you,
By love and by the gentle Ethelinda,
Be cautious of your danger, rest in silence.
In holy matters Zeal may be your guide,
And lift you on her flaming wings to heav'n,
But here on earth trust Reason and be safe.

Arib. 'Tis true the present angry face of things
Bespeaks our coolest thoughts: the British king,
Ambrosius, arms and calls us forth to battle,
Demanding back the fruitful fields of Kent,
By Vortigern to royal Hengist giv'n,
A mean reward for all those Saxon lives
Were lost in propping Britain's sinking state.

Osw. The war with Britain is a distant danger,
Nor to be weigh'd with our domestick fears.

Young-Offa, chief among our Saxon princes,
 Who at the King's entreaty friendly came
 From Northern Jutland and the banks of Elbe
 With twice ten thousand warriors to his aid,
 Frowns on our court, complains aloud of wrongs,
 And wears a publick face of discontent.

Arib. 'Tis said he is offended that the King
 Delays to wed his sister.

Osw. 'Twas agreed,
 'Twas made the first condition of their friendship,
 And sworn with all the pomp of priests and altars,
 That beauteous Rodogune should be our queen,
 Then wherefore this delay? The time was fix'd,
 The feast was bid, and mirth proclaim'd to all;
 The crowd grew jovial with the hopes of holydays,
 And each, according to our country's manner,
 Provok'd his fellow with a friendly bowl,
 And blest'd the royal pair; when on the morn,
 The very morn that should have join'd their hands,
 The King forbad the rites.

Arib. Two days are past,
 Nor has my brother yet disclos'd the cause.
 Last night at parting from him he stopt short,
 Then catch'd my hand, and with a troubled accent,
 With words that spoke like secret shame and sorrow,
 He told me he had something to impart,
 And wish'd that I would wait him in the morning.

Osw. But see, Prince Offa and his beauteous sister!
 The King's most favour'd counsellor, old Seofrid,
 Is with 'em too.

Arib. Retire; I would not meet 'em;
 That princess, Oswald, is esteem'd a wonder:
 To me she seems most fair; and yet, methinks,
 Dost thou not mark? there is I know not what
 Of sullen and severe, of fierce and haughty,
 That pleases not but awes: I gaze astonish'd,
 And fear prevents desire.—“ So men tremble
 “ When lightning shoots in glitt'ring trails along:
 “ It shines 'tis true, and gilds the gloomy night,
 “ But where it strikes 'tis fatal.” [*Exeunt Arib. and Osw.*

Enter OFFA, RODOGUNE, SEOFRID, and Attendants.

Of. By Woden no! I will not think he meant it;

Revenge had else been swift—So high I hold
 The honour of a soldier and a king
 I won't think your master meant to wrong me.
 Let him beware however—jealous friendship
 And beauty's tender fame can brook no slights.

What in a foe I pardon or despise
 Is deadly from a friend, and so to be repaid.

Scos. Whatever fame or ancient story tells

Of brother's love or celebrated friends,
 Whose faith in perils oft' and oft' in death
 Severely had been try'd and never broke,
 Such is the truth and such the grateful mind
 Of royal Hengist to the princely Offa.

Nor you, fair princess! [*To Rodogune.*] frown if wars and
 troubles,

If watchful councils and if cares, which wait
 On kings, the nursing fathers of their people,
 Withhold a while the monarch from your arms.

Rod. When fierce Ambrosius leads the Britons forth,

Thunders in arms and shakes the dusty field,
 It suits thy wary master's caution well
 To sit with dreaming hoary heads at council,
 And waste the midnight taper in debates;
 But let him still be wise, consult his safety,
 And trouble me no more. Does he send thee
 With tales of dull respect and faint excuses;
 Tell him he might have spar'd the formal message
 Till some kind friend had told him how I languish'd,
 How like a turtle I bemoan'd his absence.

Scos. Pardon, fair Excellence! if salt'ring age

Profanes the passion I was bid to paint,
 And drops the tale imperfect from my tongue.
 But lovers best can plead their cause themselves;
 And see your slave the King, my master, comes
 To move your gentle heart with faithful vows,
 And pay his humble homage at your feet.

Enter the KING, Guards, and other Attendants.

King. But that I trust not to that babbler Fame,
 Who careless of the majesty of kings
 Scatters lewd lies among the crowd, and wins
 The easy idiots to believe in monsters,

I should have much to charge you with my brother:
I stand accus'd—

Of. How Sir!

King. So speaks report,

As wanting to my honour and my friend;
By you I stand accus'd.

Of. Now by our friendship,

If that be yet an oath, resolve me Hengist
Whence are these doubts between us, whence this coldness?
Say, thou who know'st, what sudden secret thought
Has stepp'd between and dash'd the publick joy.
Thou call'st me Brother; wherefore wait the priests,
And suffer Hymen's holy fires to languish?
What hinders but that now the rites begin,
That now we lose all thoughts of past displeasure,
And in the temple tie the sacred knot
Of love and friendship to endure for ever?

King. What hinders it indeed but that which makes
This medley war within, but that which causes
This sickness of the soul, and weighs her down
With more than mortal cares?

Of. What shall I call

This secret gloomy grief that hides its head
And loves to lurk in shades? Have royal minds
Such thoughts as shun the day?

King. Urge me no farther,

But like a friend be willing not to know
What to reveal would give thy friend a pain.
Be still the partner of my heart, and share
In arms and glory with me; but oh! leave,
Leave me alone to struggle thro' one thought,
One secret anxious pang, that jars within me,
That makes me act a madman's part before thee,
And talk confusion—If thou art my friend
Thou hast heard me, and be satisfy'd—if not,
I have too much descended from myself
To make the mean request—But rest we here.
To you, fair princess—

Rod. No!—there needs no more,

For I would spare thee the unready tale.
Know, faithless King! I give thee back thy vows,
And bid thee sin secure, be safely perjurd,

Since if our gods behold thee with my eyes
 Their thunder shall be kept for nobler vengeance,
 And what they scorn like me they shall forgive.

King. When anger lightens in the fair one's eyes
 Lowly we bow as to offended Heav'n,
 With blind obedience and submissive worship,
 "Nor with too curious boldness rashly reason
 "Of what is just or unjust; such high pow'r
 "Is to itself a rule and cannot err:
 "Yet this may be permitted me to speak,"
 Howe'er the present circumstance reproach me,
 Yet still my heart avows your beauty's pow'r,
 My eyes confess you fair——

Rod. Whate'er I am
 Is of myself, by native worth existing,
 Secure and independent of thy praise;
 Nor let it seem too proud a boast if minds
 By nature great are conscious of their greatness,
 And hold it mean to borrow ought from flatt'ry.

King. You are offended Lady.

Rod. Hengist no.
 Perhaps thou think'st this gen'rous indignation
 That blushing burns upon my glowing cheek,
 And sparkles in my eyes a woman's weakness,
 "The malice of a poor forsaken maid
 "Who rails at faithless man"—Mistaken Monarch!—
 For know e'en from the first my soul disdain'd thee,
 Nor am I left by thee but thou by me:
 "So was thy falsehood to my will subservient,
 "And by my purpose bound. Thus man, tho' limited
 "By Fate, may vainly think his actions free,
 "While all he does was at his hour of birth
 "Or by his gods or potent stars ordain'd."

Of. No more my sister; let the gownmen talk,
 And mark out right and wrong in noisy courts,
 While the brave find a nearer way to justice;
 They hold themselves the balance and the sword,
 And suffer wrong from none. 'Tis much beneath me
 To ask again the debt you owe to honour,
 So that be satisfy'd we still are friends
 And brothers of the war: but mark me Hengist;
 I am not us'd to wait, and if this day

Pafs unregarded as the former two
Soon as to-morrow dawns expect me——

King. Where?

Of. Arm'd in the field——

Seof. to the King.] Beseech you Sir be calm,
The valiant prince——

Of. Tho' I could wish it otherwise :
And since the honour of the Saxon name
And empire here in Britain rests upon thee,
Believe me I would still be found thy friend.

[Exeunt Offa, Rodogune, and Attendants.]

King. No, I renounce that friendship: perish too,
Perish that name and friendship both for ever!
What are the kingdoms of the peopled earth,
What are their purple and their crowns, to me,
If I am curs'd within, and want that peace
Which ev'ry slave enjoys?

Seof. My royal master,
It racks my aged heart to see you thus;
But oh! what aid, what counsel, can I bring you,
When all yon' eastern down, ev'n to the surge
That bellowing beats on Dover's chalky cliff,
With crested helmets thick embattled shines?
With these your friends what are you but the greatest?
With these your foes—Oh! let me lose that thought,
And rather think I see you Britain's king,
Ambrosius vanquish'd, and the farthest Picts
Submitted to your sway, tho' the same scene
Discover'd to my view the haughty Rodogune
Plac'd on your throne and partner of your bed.

King. What! should I barter beauty for ambition,
“Forlake my heav'n of love to reign in hell,”
Take a domestick Fury to my breast,
And never know one minute's peace again?
Statesman, thou reason'st ill: by mighty Thor,
Who wields the thunder, I will rather chuse
To meet their fury. Let 'em come together
Young Offa and Ambrosius: tho' my date
Of mortal life be short it shall be glorious;
Each minute shall be rich in some great action,
To speak the king, the hero, and the lover.

Seof. “The hero and the king are glorious names;

"But oh, my master! wherefore is the lover?"
 In honour's name remember what you are,
 Break from the bondage of this feeble passion,
 And urge your way to glory; leave with scorn
 Unmanly pleasures to unmanly minds,
 And thro' the rough the thorny paths of danger
 Aspire to virtue and immortal greatness.

King. Hence with thy hungry, dull, untimely, morals,
 The fond deluding sophistry of schools!

Who would be great but to be happy too?

"And yet such idiots are we to exchange

"Our peace and pleasure for the trifle glory."

What is the monarch mighty, rich, and great?

What but the common victim of the state,

Born to grow old in cares, to waste his blood,

And still be wretched for the publick good?

"So by the priests the noblest of the kind

"Is to atone the angry gods design'd,

"And while the meaner sort from death are freed

"The mighty bull that wont the herd to lead

"Is doom'd for fatal excellence to bleed." [Exeunt.] }

ACT II.

Enter the KING and SEOFRID.

KING.

No more of these unnecessary doubts;
 Thy cold thy cautious age is vainly anxious,
 Thy fears are inauspicious to my courage,
 And chill the native ardour of my soul.
 This sullen cloudy sky that bodes a storm
 Shall clear, and ev'ry danger fleet away;
 Our Saxons shall forget the present discord,
 And urge the Britons with united arms;
 Hymen shall be aton'd, shall join two hearts
 Agreeing, kind, and fitted for each other,
 And Aribert shall be the pledge of peace.

Seof. Propitious god of Love! incline his heart
 To melt before her eyes, to meet her wishes,

And yield submission to the haughty maid:
 "Thou that delight'st in cruel wantonness
 "To join unequal necks beneath thy yoke,
 "For once be gentle, and inspire both hearts
 "With mutual flames, that each may burn alike:
 "Oft' hast thou ruin'd kingdoms, save one now,
 "And those who curs'd thee,
 "Parsimonious Age
 "And rigid Wisdom, shall raise altars to thee!"

Enter ARIBERT.

King. But see, he comes, "and brings our wishes with
 Oh Aribert! my soul has long desir'd thee, [him."
 Has waited long for thy relief, and wanted
 To share the burden which she bears with thee,
 And give thee half her sorrows.

Arib. Give me all,
 Ev'n all the pain you feel, and let my truth
 Be greatly try'd; let there be much to suffer,
 To prove how much my willing heart can bear
 To ease my king, my brother, and my friend.

King. I know thee ever gentle in thy nature,
 "Yielding and kind, and tender in thy friendship,"
 And therefore all my hope of peace dwells with thee;
 For oh! my heart has labour'd long with pain,
 "I have endur'd the rage of secret grief,
 "A malady that burns and rankles inward,"
 And wanted such a hand as thine to heal me.

Arib. Speak it, nor wound the softness of my soul
 With these obscure complainings: speak my Lord.

King. First then, this fatal marriage is my curse;
 This galling yoke to which my neck is doom'd,
 This bride—she is my plague—she haunts my dreams,
 Invades the softer silent hour of rest,
 And breaks the balmy slumber; night grows tedious,
 She seems to lag and hang her sable wings,
 And yet I dread the dawning of the morn,
 As if some screaming sprite had shriek'd, and call'd,
 Hengist, arise, to-morrow is thy last.

Arib. A thousand speaking griefs are in your eyes
 To tell the rack within—I read it plain;
 But oh, my King! what prophet could have dreamt
 A turn like this, that beauty should destroy,
 And love which should have bless'd you curse you most?

King. Oh! wherefore nam'st thou love? can there be love
When choice, the free the cheerful voice of Nature,
And reason's dearest privilege, is wanting?
What cruel laws impose a bride or bridegroom
On any brute but man? Observe the beasts,
And mark the feather'd kind; does not the turtle,
When Venus and the coming spring incite him,
Chuse out his mate himself, and love her most,
Because he likes her best? but kings must wed
(Curse on the hard condition of their royalty!)
That sordid slaves may toil and eat in peace.

Arib. 'Tis hard indeed!—Would she had never come,
This——

King. So would I—but now——

Arib. Ay, now, what remedy,
When to refuse the Saxon Offa's sister
Shall shake your throne, and make the name of Hengist,
The famous the victorious name of Hengist,
Grow vile and mean in Britain?

King. Yes, my brother,
There is a remedy, and only one.
This proud imperious fair, whose haughty soul
Disdains the humble monarchs of the earth,
"Who soars elate, affects to tread the stars,
"And scorns to mingle but with those above,"
Ev'n she, with all that majesty and beauty,
"The proudest and the fairest of her sex,"
She has the passions of a very woman,
And dotes on thee my Aribert.

Arib. On me!——
What means my Lord? impossible!

King. 'Tis true,
As true as that my happiness depends
Upon her love to thee. My faithful Seofrid
Has pierc'd into her very inmost heart,
And found thee reigning there.

Arib. Then all is plain;
My swelling heart heaves at the wrong you do me,
And wo'not be repress'd. Some fiend from hell
Has shed his poison in your royal breast,
And stung you with the gnawing canker jealousy.
But wherefore should I ask for fiends from hell,

“ And trace the malice of the thought from far,”
 “ Since the perfidious author stands confess’d?
 This villain has traduc’d me.—

Seof. “ By the soul
 “ Of your victorious father, royal Hengist,
 “ My ever gracious ever honour’d master!
 “ Much have you wrong’d your faithful Seofrid,
 “ To think that I would kindle wrath betwixt you,
 “ Or strive to break your holy bond of brotherhood!

King. “ No, Aribert, accuse him not, nor doubt
 “ His oft’ his well-try’d faith; but cast thy eyes
 “ Back on thyself, and while I hold the mirror
 “ Survey thyself, the certain cause of love;
 “ Survey thy youthful form, by nature fashion’d
 “ The most unerring pattern of her skill,
 “ The pomp of loveliness she spreads all o’er thee,
 “ And decks thee lavishly with ev’ry grace
 “ That charms in woman or commands in man;
 “ Behold—nor wonder then if crowns are scorn’d,
 “ And purple Majesty looks vile before thee.

Arib. “ Oh! whither, whither would you lead? and why
 “ This prodigality of illtim’d praise?

Seof. “ Were you not all my royal master said,
 “ Form’d to enthrall the hearts of the soft sex,
 “ Yet that she loves is plain from——

Arib. “ Hence, thou sycophant!”

Seof. Your pardon Sir; it has not been my office
 To forge a tale, or cheat your ear with flattery,
 Nor have I other meaning than your service;
 But that the princess loves you is most true:
 Emma, the chief, most favour’d of her women,
 The only partner of her secret soul,
 To me avow’d her passion; and howe’er
 Her haughty looks resent the King’s delay,
 Yet in her heart with pleasure she applauds it,
 And would forego, tho’ hard to womankind,
 The pride, high place, and dignity, of empire,
 To share an humbler fate with princely Aribert.

King. Why dost thou turn away? wherefore deform
 The grace and sweetness of thy smiling youth
 With that ungentle frown? Art thou not pleas’d
 To see the tyrant beauty kneel before thee,

"Divested of her pride, and yield to thee,"
Unask'd, a prize for which, like Grecian Helen,
The great ones of the earth might strive in arms,
And empires well be lost?

Arib. Are we not brothers?

We are, and Nature form'd us here alike,
Save that her partial hand gave all the majesty
And greatness to my King, and left me rich
Only in plainness, friendship, truth, and tenderness:
Then wonder not our passions are the same,
That the same objects cause our love and hate.
You say you cannot love this beauteous stranger,
Is not my heart like your's?

King. Come near, my brother,
And while I lean thus fondly on thy bosom
I will disclose my inmost soul to thee,
And shew thee ev'ry secret sorrow there.
I love, my Aribert, I dote to death;
The raging flame has touch'd my heart, my brain,
And madness will ensue.

Arib. 'Tis most unhappy!
But say, what royal maid, or Saxon born
Or in the British court, what fatal beauty,
Can rival Rodogune's imperial charms?

King. 'Tis all a tale of wonder, 't is a riddle.
High on a throne, and royal as I am,
I want a slave's consent to make me happy:
Nay more, possess'd of her I love, or Love,
Or some divinity more strong than Love,
Forbids my bliss, nor have I yet enjoy'd her.
'Tho' I have taught my haughty heart to bow,
'Tho' lowly as she is, of birth obscure,
And of a race unknown, I oft' have offer'd
To raise her to my throne, make her my queen,
Yet still her colder heart denies my suit,
And weeping still she answers 't is in vain.

Arib. Mysterious all and dark! yet such is Love,
And such the laws of his fantastick empire;
The wanton boy delights to bend the mighty,
And scoffs at the vain wisdom of the wise.

King. Here in my palace, in this next apartment,
Unknown to all but this my faithful Seofrid,

The charmer of my eyes, my heart's dear hope,
Remains, at once my captive and my queen!

Arib. Ha! in your palace! here!——

King. Ev'n here, my brother;
But thou, thou shalt behold her, for to thee,
As to my other self, I trust. The cares
Of courts and tyrant bus'ness draw me hence,
But Seofrid shall stay, and to thy eyes

[*The King signs to Seofrid, who goes out.*]

Disclose the secret treasure. Oh my Aribert!
Thou wot not wonder what distracts my peace
When thou behold'st those eyes. Pity thy brother,
And from the beach lend him thy friendly hand,
Lest while conflicting with a sea of sorrows
The proud waves overbear him and he perish.

Arib. Judge me, just Heav'n! and you, my royal bro-
If my own life be dear to me as your's. [ther,
All that my scanty pow'r can give is your's:
If I am circumscrib'd by Fate, oh pity me
That I can do no more! for oh my King!
I would be worthy of a brother's name,
Would keep up all my int'rest in your heart,
That when I kneel before you, (as it soon
May happen that I shall) when I fall prostrate,
And doubtfully and trembling ask a boon,
The greatest you can give or I can ask,
I may find favour in that day before you,
And bless a brother's love that bids me live.

King. Talk not of asking, but command my pow'r.
By Thor, the greatest of our Saxon gods,
I swear the day that sees thee join'd to Rodogune
Shall see thee crown'd, and partner of my throne.
Whate'er our arms shall conquer more in Britain
Thine be the pow'r and mine but half the name.
With joy to thee, my Aribert, I yield
The wreathes and trophies of the dusty field,
To thee I leave this noblest isle to sway,
And teach the stubborn Britons to obey,
While from my cares to Beauty I retreat,
Drink deep the luscious banquet, and forget
That crowns are glorious or that kings are great.

[*Exit King.*]

Arib. "Oh, fatal love!—curst inauspicious flame!
 "Thy baleful fires blaze o'er us like a comet,
 "And threaten discord, desolation, rage,
 "And most malignant mischief."—Lov'd by Rodogune!
 What I!—must I wed Rodogune!—Oh misery!—
 "Fantastick cruelty of hoodwink'd Chance!"
 There is no end of thought—the labyrinth winds,
 And I am lost for ever—Oh! where now,
 Where is my Ethelinda now!—that dear one
 That gently us'd to breathe the sounds of peace,
 "Gently as dews descend or slumbers creep,"
 That us'd to brood o'er my tempestuous soul
 And hush me to a calm?

Enter SEOFRID and ETHELINDA.

Seof. Thus still to weep
 Is to accuse my royal master's truth:
 He loves you with the best the noblest meaning,
 With honour——

Ethel. Keep, oh! keep him in that thought,
 And save me from pollution. Let me know
 All miseries beside, each kind of sorrow,
 "And prove me with variety of pains,
 "Whips, racks, and flames," for I was born to suffer,
 And when the measure of my woes is full,
 That Pow'r in whom I trust will set me free.

Arib. It cannot be—no, 't is illusion all; [*Seeing her.*
 Some mimic phantom wears the lovely form,
 Has learn'd the musick of her voice to mock me,
 To strike me dead with wonder and with fear.

Ethel. And do I see thee then, my Lord! my Aribert!
 What! once more hold thee in my trembling arms!
 Here let my days and here my sorrows end:
 I have enough of life.

Seof. Ha! "what is this!"
 "But mark a little farther."

Ethel. Keep me here,
 Oh! bind me to thy breast, and hold me fast,
 For if we part once more 't will be for ever.
 It is not to be told what ruin follows,
 'Tis more than death, 'tis all that we can fear,
 And we shall never never meet again.

Arib. Then here, thus folded in each other's arms,

Here, let us here resolve to die together,
 Defy the malice of our cruel fate,
 And thus preserve the sacred bond inviolable
 "Which Heav'n and Love ordain'd to last for ever."
 But 'tis in vain, 'tis torn, 'tis broke already,
 "And envious Hell, with its more potent malice,
 "Has ruin'd and deform'd the beauteous work of Heav'n;"
 Else wherefore art thou here? tell me at once,
 And strike me to the heart——But 'tis too plain;
 I read thy wrongs——I read the horrid incest——

Seof. "Ha! incest said he? incest"—— [*Aside.*

Ethel. Oh! forbear

The dreadful impious sound; I shake with horror
 To hear it nam'd. Guard me thou gracious Heav'n!
 Thou that hast been my sure defence till now,
 Guard me from hell, and that its blackest crime.

Arib. Yes, ye celestial host, ye saints and angels,
 She is your care, you ministers of goodness!
 For this bad world is leagu'd with hell against her,
 And only you can save her.——I myself, [*To Ethel.*
 Ev'n I, am sworn thy foe; I have undone thee;
 My fondness now betrays thee to destruction.

Ethel. Then all is bad indeed.

Arib. Thou seest it not:

My heedless tongue has talk'd away thy life;
 And mark the minister of both our fates,

[*Pointing to Seofrid.*

Mark with what joy he hugs the dear discov'ry,
 And thanks my folly for the fatal secret:
 "Mark how already in his working brain
 "He forms the well-concerted scheme of mischief:
 "'Tis fix'd, 'tis done, and both are doom'd to death"——
 And yet there is a pause——If graves are silent,
 And the dead wake not to molest the living,
 Be death thy portion——die, and with thee die
 The knowledge of our loves.

[*Aribert catches hold of Seofrid with one hand, with the
 other draws his sword, and holds it to his breast.*

Seof. What means my Lord?

Ethel. Oh, hold! for mercy's sake restrain thy hand!

[*Holding his hand.*

Blot not thy innocence with guiltless blood.
 What would thy rash thy frantick rage intend?

Arib. Thy safety and my own——

Ethel. Trust 'em to Heav'n.

Seof. Has then my hoary head deserv'd no better
 Than to behold my royal master's son
 Lift up his armed hand against my life?
 Oh Prince! oh! wherefore burn your eyes? and why,
 Why is your sweetest temper turn'd to fury?

Arib. Oh! thou hast seen and heard and known too much,
 Hast pry'd into the secret of my heart,
 And found the certain means of my undoing.

Seof. "Where is the merit of my former life,
 "The try'd experience of my faithful years?
 "Are they forgot, and can I be that villain?"

Arib. "Thou wert my father's old his faithful servant."

Seof. Now by thy life, our empire's other hope,
 Oh, royal youth! I swear my heart bleeds for thee;
 Nor can this object of thy fond desire,
 This lovely weeping fair, be dearer to thee
 Than thou art to thy faithful Seofrid.

I saw thy love, I heard thy tender sorrows,
 With somewhat like an anxious father's pity,
 With cares, and with a thousand fears for thee.

Arib. "What!" is it possible!

Seof. Of all the names
 Religion knows point the most sacred out,
 And let me swear by that.

Arib. I would believe thee.

Forgive the madness of my first despair.

[*Letting fall his sword.*]

And if thou hast compassion shew it now;
 Be now that friend, be now that father to me,
 Be now that guardian angel, which I want;
 Have pity on my youth, and save my love.

Seof. First then, to stay these sudden gusts of passion
 That hurry you from reason, rest assur'd
 The secret of your love lives with me only.
 The dangers are not small that seem to threaten you,
 Yet would you trust you to your old man's care
 I durst be bold to warrant yet your safety.

Arib. "Perhaps the ruling hand of Heav'n is in it,

" And working thus unseen by second causes
 " Ordaîns thee for its instrument of good
 " To me and to my love." Then be it so,
 I trust thee with my life; but oh! yet more,
 " I trust thee with a treasure that transcends
 " To infinite degrees the life of Aribert;"
 I trust thee with the partner of my soul,
 My wife, the kindest, dearest, and the truest,
 That ever wore the name.

Seof. Now blessings on you——

May peace of mind and mutual joys attend
 To crown your fair affections! may the sorrows
 That now sit heavy on you pass away,
 And a long train of smiling years succeed
 To pay you for the past! *Yet let me ask,*
For wonder still possesses all my mind,
Whence and how grew your loves?

Arib. It was my chance,
 On that distinguish'd day when valiant Flavian,
 A name renown'd among the British chiefs,
 Fell by the swords of our victorious Saxons,
 To rescue this his daughter from the violence
 Of the fierce soldier's rage. " Nor need I tell thee,
 " For thou thyself behold'st her, that I lov'd her,
 " Lov'd her, and was belov'd." Our meeting hearts
 Consented soon, and marriage made us one.
 Her holy faith and Christian cross, oppos'd
 Against the Saxon gods, join'd with the memory
 Of the dread king my father's fierce command,
 Urg'd me to seek my Ethelinda's safety,
 And hide her from the world. Just to my wish,
 Beneath the friendly covert of a wood,
 Close by whose side the silver Medway ran,
 I found a little pleasant lonely cottage,
 A mansion fit for Innocence and Love,
 Had but a guard of angels dwelt around it
 To keep off Violence—but forc'd from thence—
 By whom betray'd—why I behold her here—
 There I am lost——

Ethel. There my sad part begins.

It was the second morn since thou hadst left me
 When thro' the wood I took my usual way

To seek the coolness of the wellspread shade
 That overlooks the flood. On a fear branch
 Low bending to the bank I sat me down,
 Musing and still; my hand sustain'd my head,
 My eyes were fix'd upon the passing stream,
 And all my thoughts were bent on heav'n and thee,
 When sudden thro' the woods a bounding stag
 Rush'd headlong down and plung'd amidst the river;
 Nor far behind, upon a foaming horse,
 There followed hard a man of royal port;
 I rose, and would have sought the thicker wood,
 But while I hurry'd on my hasty flight
 My heedless feet deceiv'd me, and I fell:
 Straight leaping from his horse he rais'd me up.
 "Surpris'd and troubled at the sudden chance
 "I begg'd he would permit me to retire,
 "But he with furious wild disorder'd looks,"
 With eyes and glowing visage flashing flame,
 "Swore 't was impossible; he never would,
 "He could not leave me; with ten thousand ravings;
 "The dictates of his looser rage. At length"
 He seiz'd my trembling hand; I shriek'd and call'd
 To Heav'n for aid, when in a luckless hour
 Your faithful servants, Adelmars and Kenwald,
 Came up, and lost their lives in my defence.

Arib. Where will the horror of thy tale have end?

Ethel. The furious King, (for such I found he was)
 By three attendants join'd, bore me away,
 Resistless, dying, senseless with my fears.
 Since then, a wretched captive, I deplore
 Our common woes, for mine I know are thine.

Arib. "Witness the sorrows of the present hour,
 "The fears that rend ev'n now my lab'ring heart,
 "For thee and for myself. And yet, alas!
 "What are the present ills compar'd to those
 "That yet remain behind for both to suffer?
 "Think where thy helpless innocence is lodg'd;
 "The rage of lawless pow'r and burning lust
 "Are bent on thee; 't is hell's important cause,
 "And all its blackest fiends are arm'd against thee.

Ethel. "'Tis terrible! my fears are mighty on me,
 "And all the coward woman trembles in me.

" But oh! when hope and neverfailing faith
 " Revive my fainting foul, and lift my thought
 " Up to yon' azure sky and burning lights above,
 " Methinks I read my safety written there;
 " Methinks I see the warlike host of heav'n
 " Radiant in glitt'ring arms and beamy gold,
 " The great angelick pow'rs, go forth by bands
 " To succour truth and innocence below;
 " Hell trembles at the sight, and hides its head
 " In utmost darkness, while on earth each heart
 " Like mine is fill'd with peace and joy unutterable."

Seof. Whatever gods there be their care you are;
 Nor let your gentle breast harbour one thought
 Of outrage from the King: his noble nature,
 Tho' warm, tho' fierce, and prone to sudden passions,
 Is just and gentle when the torrent rage
 Ebbs out and cooler reason comes again.
 Should he, (which all ye holy pow'rs avert!)
 Urg'd by his love, rush on to impious force,
 If that should happen, in that last extreme
 On peril of my life I will assist you,
 And you shall find your safety in your flight.

Arib. Oh! guard her innocence; let all thy care
 Be watchful to preserve her from dishonour.

Seof. Rest on my diligence and caution safe.
 Ere twice the ruler of the day return
 To gild the chalky cliffs on Britain's shore
 Some favourable moment shall be found
 To move the King your royal brother's heart
 With the sad tender story of your loves.
 Till then be cheer'd, and hide your inward sorrows
 With well-dissembled necessary smiles;
 Let the King read compliance in your looks,
 A free and ready yielding to his wishes.
 At present to prevent his doubts 't were fit
 That you should take a hasty leave and part.

Ethel. What! must we part?

Seof. But for a few short hours,
 That you may meet in joy and part no more.

Arib. Oh, fatal sound! oh, grief unknown till now!
 While thou art present my sad heart seems lighter;
 I gaze and gather comfort from thy beauty;

"Thy gentle eyes send forth a quick'ning spirit,
 "And feed the dying lamp of life within me;"
 But oh! when thou are gone, and my fond eyes
 Shall seek thee all around, but seek in vain,
 What pow'r, what angel, shall supply thy place,
 Shall help me to support my sorrows then,
 "And save my soul from death?"

Ethel. My life! my Lord!

What would my heart say to thee!——but no more——
 Oh! lift thy eyes up to that holy Pow'r
 Whose wondrous truths and majesty divine
 Thy Ethelinda taught thee first to know,
 There fix thy faith and triumph o'er the world;
 For who can help or who can save besides?
 Does not the deep grow calm and the rude north
 Be hush'd at his command? thro' all his works
 Does not his servant Nature hear his voice,
 Hear and obey? then what is impious man
 That we should fear him when Heav'n owns our cause?
 That Heav'n shall make my Aribert its care,
 "Shall to thy groans and sighings lend an ear,"
 And save thee in the moment of despair. }

Arib. Oh! thou hast touch'd me with the sacred theme,
 And my cold heart is kindled at thy flame;
 "An active hope grows busy in my breast,
 "And something tells me we shall both be blest."
 Like thine my eyes the starry thrones pursue,
 And heav'n disclos'd stands open to my view;
 And see the guardian angels of the good
 Reclining soft on many a golden cloud,
 To earth they seem their gentle heads to bow,
 And pity what we suffer here below;
 "But oh! to thee, thee most they seem to turn,
 "Joy in thy joys, and for thy sorrows mourn;"
 Thee, oh my love! their common care they make,
 Me to their kind protection too they take,
 And save me for my Ethelinda's sake. }

[*Exeunt Stofrid and Ethelinda at one door, Aribert at the other.*

ACT III.

Enter SEOFRID.

SEOFRID.

WHAT is the boasted majesty of kings,
 Their godlike greatness, if their fate depend
 Upon that meanest of their passions, love?
 The pile their warlike fathers toil'd to raise,
 That noble monument of deathless fame,
 A woman's hand o'erturns. "The cedar thus,
 "That lifted his aspiring head to heav'n,
 "Secure, and fearless of the sounding axe,
 "Is made the prey of worms; his root destroy'd,
 "He sinks at once to earth, the mighty ruin
 "And triumph of a wretched insect's pow'r."
 Is there a remedy in human wisdom.
 My mind has left unfought to help this evil?
 I would preserve 'em both the royal brothers;
 But if their Fates ordain that one must fall
 Then let my master stand. This Christian woman——
 Ay, there the mischief comes!—"What are our gods
 "That they permit her to defy their pow'r?
 "But that's not much; let their priests look to that.
 "Were she but well remov'd"——But then the King——
 Why absence, bus'ness, or another face,
 A thousand things may cure him——Would 'twere done,
 "And my head safe——That! let me look to that"——
 But see, the husband comes!——Ha!——not ill thought;
 It shall be try'd at least.——

*Enter ARIBERT.**Arib.* Still to this place

My heart inclines, still hither turn my eyes,
 Hither my feet unbidden find their way.
 "Like a fond mother from her dying babe
 "Forc'd by officious friends' and servants' care,
 "I linger at the door, and wish to know,
 "Yet dread to hear the fate of what I love."
 Oh Seofrid! dost thou not wonder much,
 And pity my weak temper, when thou seest me
 Thus in a moment chang'd from hot to cold,
 My active fancy glowing now with hopes,

Anon thus drooping, death in my pale visage,
My heart and my chill veins all freezing with despair?

Seof. I bear an equal portion of your sorrows;
Your fears too all are mine; and oh! my Prince,
I would partake your hopes, but my cold age,
Still apt to fear the worst—

Arib. What dost thou fear?

Seof. "Nay, nothing worse than what we both have

Arib. How! nothing!—speak thy fear. [fear'd.

Seof. "Why—nothing now"—

The King!—"that's all."

Arib. The King!—"oh, that's too much!"

And yet—yet there is more; I read it plain

In thy dark sullen visage—"like a storm

"That gathers black upon the frowning sky

"And grumbles in the wind—But let it come,

"Let the whole tempest burst upon my head,

"Let the fierce lightning blast, the thunder rive me;"

And oh! 't is sure the fear of what may come

Does far transcend the pain.

Seof. You fear too soon,

And fancy drives you much too fiercely on.

I do not say that what may happen will;

Chance often mocks what wisely we foresee:

"Besides, the ruling gods are over all,

"And order as they please their world below."

The King 't is true is noble—but impetuous;

"And love, or call it by the coarser name,

"Lust, is of all the frailties of our nature

"What most we ought to fear; the headstrong beast

"Rushes along impatient for the course,

"Nor hears the rider's call nor feels the rein."

Arib. What wouldst thou have me think?

Seof. Think of the worst,

Your better fortune will arrive more welcome.

To speak then with that openness of heart

That should deserve your trust, I have my fears:

What if at some dead hour of night the King

Intend a visit to your weeping princess?

Arib. Ha!—

Seof. "He may go, 't is true, with a fair purpose."

Suppose her sunk into a downy slumber,

Her beating heart just tir'd and gone to rest :
 " Methinks I see her on her couch repos'd,
 " The lovely, helpless, sweet, unguarded, innocence !
 " With gentle heavings rise her snowy breasts,
 " Soft steals the balmy breath, the rosy hew
 " Glows on her cheek, a deep vermilion dies
 " Her dewy lip, while Peace and smiling Joy
 " Sit hush'd and silent on the sleeping fair ;"

Then think what thoughts invade the gazing King ;
 Catch'd with the sudden flame at once he burns,

At once he flies resistless on his prey :
 Waking she starts distracted with the fright,
 To Aribert's lov'd name in vain she flies ;
 Shrieking she calls her absent lord in vain :
 The King possess'd of all his furious will—

Arib. First sink the tyrant-ravisher to hell !
 Seize him ye Fiends!—first perish thou and I !
 Let us not live to hear of so much horror:
 The cursed deed will turn me savage wild,
 " Blot ev'ry thought of nature from my soul.
 " A brother!—I will rush and tear his breast,
 " Be drunk with gushing blood," and glut my vengeance
 With his incestuous heart.

Seof. It is but just
 You should be mov'd, for sure the thought is dreadful.
 But keep this swelling indignation down,
 And let your cooler reason now prevail,
 That may perhaps find out some means of safety.

Arib. Talk'st thou of safety!—we may talk of heav'n,
 May gaze with rapture on yon' starry regions,
 But who shall lend us wings to reach their height?
 Impossible!—

Seof. There is a way yet left,
 And only one.

Arib. Ha! speak—

Seof. Her sudden flight.

Arib. Oh! by what friendly means? be swift to answer,
 Nor waste the precious minutes with delay.

Seof. The King, now absent from the palace, seems
 To yield a fair occasion for your wishes:
 A private postern opens to my gardens
 Thro' which the beauteous captive might remove,

Till night and a disguise shall farther aid her
To fly with safety to the Britons' camp:
'Tis true, one danger I might well object—

Arib. Oh! do not, do not blast the springing hopes
Which thy kind hand has planted in my soul:
If there be danger turn it all on me;
Let my devoted head——

Seof. Nay—" 't is not much ;"
'Tis but my life, and I will gladly give it
To buy your peace of mind.

Arib. Alas! what mean'st thou?

Seof. Does it not follow plain? shall not the King
Turn all his rage upon this hoary head?
Shall not all arts of cruelty be try'd
To find out tortures equal to my falsehood?

"Imagine you behold me bound and scourg'd,
"My aged muscles harrow'd up with whips,
"Or hear me groaning on the rending rack,
"Groaning and screaming with the sharpest sense
"Of piercing pain, or see me gash'd with knives,
"And fear'd with burning steel, till the scorch'd marrow
"Fries in the bones and shrinking sinews start,
"A smeary foam works o'er my grinding jaws,
"And utmost anguish shakes my lab'ring frame;"
For thus it must be.

Arib. Oh, my friend! my father!
"It must not be, it never can, it sha' not."
Wouldst thou be kind and save my Ethelinda,
Leave me to answer all my brother's fury:
The crime, the falsehood, shall be all my own.

Seof. Just to my wish.

[*Aside.*

Arib. Thou shalt accuse me to him:
Thou know'st his own admittance gave me entrance;
Swear that I stole her, that I forc'd her from thee;
Frame with thy utmost skill some artful tale,
And I'll avow it all.

Seof. Then have you thought
Upon the danger Sir?

Arib. Oh! there is none,
Can be no danger while my love is safe.

Seof. Methinks indeed it lessens to my view.
When the first violence of rage is over

The fondness of a brother will return,
And plead your cause with Nature in his heart;
You will, you must be safe; and yet 'tis hard,
And grieves me much I should accuse you to him.

Arib. 'Tis that must cover the design. But fly,
"Lose not a minute's time;"

Haste to remove her from this curst place;
My faithful Oswald shall at night attend thee,
And help to guard her to the British camp;
"Thou know'st that is not far.

Seof. "Too near I know it." [Aside.

Arib. She has a brother there, the noble Lucius,
A gallant youth, and dear to brave Ambrosius;
To his kind care resign thy beauteous charge.

Seof. This instant I obey you. [Going.

Arib. Half my fears
Are over now—

Seof. One thing I had forgot.
It will import us much that you should seem
Inclin'd to meet the love of haughty Rodogune:
" 'Twill cost you but a little courtly flatt'ry,
"A kind respectful look, join'd with a sigh,
"A few soft tender words that mean just nothing,
"Yet win most womens' hearts." But see she comes:
Constrain your temper Sir; be false, and meet her
With her own sex's arts. Pursue your task,
And doubt not all shall prosper to your wish.

[Exit Seofrid.

Arib. She comes indeed! now where shall I begin,
How shall I teach my tongue to frame a language
So diff'rent from my heart? Oh Ethelinda!
My heart was made to fit and pair with thine,
Simple and plain, and fraught with artless tenderness;
Form'd to receive one love, and only one,
"But pleas'd and proud, and dearly fond of that,
"It knows not what there can be in variety,
"And would not if it could."

Enter RODOGUNE.

Rod. Why do I stay,
Why linger thus within this hated place,
Where ev'ry object shocks my loathing eyes,
And calls my injur'd glory to remembrance?

The King! the wretch! but wherefore did I name him!
Find out, my soul, in thy rich store of thought
Somewhat more great more worthy of thyself,
Or let the mimic Fancy shew its art,—
And paint some pleasing image to delight me;
Let beauty mix with majesty and youth,
Let manly grace be temper'd well with softness,
Let Love, the god himself, adorn the work,
And I will call the charming phantom Aribert.
Oh Venus!—whither—whither would I wander?
Be hush'd my tongue—"Ye gods!"—'t is he himself—

[Seeing Aribert.]

Arib. When, fairest Princess! you avoid our court,
And lonely thus from the full pomp retire,
Love and the Graces follow to your solitude,
They crowd to form the shining circle round you,
And all the train seems your's, "while purple Majesty,
"And all those outward shews which we call greatness,
"Languish and droop, seem empty and forsaken,
"And draw the wond'ring gazer's eyes no more.

Rod. "The courtier's art is meanly known in Britain
"If your's present their service and their vows
"At any shrine but where their master kneels;
"You know your brother pays not his to me,
"Nor would I that he should.

Arib. "The hearts of kings
"Are plac'd, 't is true, beyond their subjects' search;
"Yet might I judge by love's or reason's rules
"Where shall my brother find on earth a beauty
"Like what I now behold?"

Rod. That you can flatter
Is common to your sex; you say indeed
We women love it—and perhaps we do:
Fools that we are, we know that you deceive us,
And yet, as if the fraud were pleasing to us,
And our undoing joy——still you go on,
And still we hear you——But, to change the theme,
I'll find a fitter for you than my beauty——

Arib. Then let it be the love of royal Hengist.

Rod. The King, your brother, could not chuse an advocate
Whom I would sooner hear on any subject,

'Bating that only one, his love, than you,
 Tho' you perhaps (for some have wondrous arts)
 Could soften the harsh sound. The string that jars,
 When rudely touch'd, ungrateful to the sense,
 With pleasure feels the master's flying fingers,
 Swells into harmony, and charms the hearers.

Arib. Then hear me speak of love——

Rod. But not of his.

Arib. 'Tis true I should not grace the story much;
 Rude and unskilful in the moving passion,
 I should not paint its flames with equal warmth;
 Strength, life, and glowing colours, would be wanting,
 And languid nature speak the work imperfect.

Rod. Then haply yet your breast remains untouch'd,
 Tho' that seems strange: you've seen the court of Britain;
 There, as I oft' have heard, imperial Beauty
 Reigns in its native throne like light in heav'n,
 While all the fair ones of the neighb'ring world
 With second lustre meanly seem to shine,
 The faint reflections of the glory there.

Arib. If e'er my heart incline to thoughts of love
 Methinks I should not (tho' perhaps I err)
 Expect to meet the gentle passion join'd
 With pomp and greatness: courts may boast of beauty,
 But Love is seldom found to dwell amongst 'em.

Rod. Then courts are wretched.

Arib. So they seem to Love:
 From pride, from wealth, from bus'ness, and from pow'r,
 Loathing he flies, and seeks the peaceful village;
 He seeks the cottage in the tufted grove,
 The russet fallows and the verdant lawns,
 The clear cool brook and the deep woody glade,
 Bright winter fires and summer ev'ning sun;
 These he prefers to gilded roofs and crowns:
 Here he delights to pair the constant swain
 With the sweet unaffected yielding maid;
 Here is his empire, here his choice to reign,
 Here, where he dwells with Innocence and Truth.

Rod. To minds which know no better these are joys,
 But princes sure are born with nobler thoughts.
 Love is in them a flame that mounts to heav'n,
 And seeks its source divine and kindred stars;

That urges on the mortal man to dare,
Kindles the vast desires of glory in him,
And makes ambition's sacred fires burn bright;
Nor you, how'er your tongue disguise your heart,
Have meaner hopes than these.

Arib. Mine have been still
Match'd with my birth, a younger brother's hopes.

Rod. "Nay more; methinks I read your future greatness,
"And like some bard inspir'd I could foretel
"What wondrous things our gods reserve for you.
"Perhaps ev'n now your better stars are join'd,
"Auspicious Love and Fortune now conspire
"At once to crown you and bestow that greatness
"Which partial Nature at your birth deny'd."

Enter the KING, Guards, and other Attendants.

King. She must, she shall, be found, tho' she be sunk
Deep to the centre, tho' eternal Night
"Spread wide her sable wing to shade her beauties
"And shut me from her sight." But say, thou traitor,
Thou that hast made the name of Friendship vile,
And broke the bonds of duty and of nature,
Where hast thou hid thy theft?—"So young so false—
"Have I not been a father to thy youth,
"And lov'd thee with a more than brother's love?
"And am I thus repaid!"——But bring her forth,
Or, by our gods thou dy'st.

Rod. What means this rage? [*Aside.*]

Arib. Then briefly thus. You are my king and brother;
The names which most I reverence on earth,
And fear offending most; yet to defend
My honour and my love from violation
O'er ev'ry bar resistless will I rush,
And in despite of proud tyrannick pow'r
Seize and assert my right.

King. What, thine! thy right!
"Riddles and tales!"

Arib. Mine by the dearest tie,
By holy marriage mine: she is my wife.

Rod. "Racks, tortures, madness, seize me! Oh," con-
fusion! [*Aside.*]

Arib. I see thy heart swells, and thy flaming visage
Reddens with rage at this unwelcome truth;

But since I know my Ethelinda safe

I have but little care for what may happen :

“ To-morrow may be Heav’n’s——or your’s to take ;”

If this day be my last, why farewell life,

I hold it well bestow’d for her I love.

Rod. “ May sorrow, shame, and sickness, overtake her,

“ And all her beauties like my hopes be blasted.” [*Aside.*

King. So brave ! but I shall find the means to tame you,

“ To make thee curse thy folly, curse thy love,

And to the dreadful gods who reign beneath

Devote thy fatal bride. She is a Christian,

Remember that fond boy, and then remember

That sacred vow which perjur’d as thou art

Prostrate at Woden’s altar, and invoking

With solemn Runick rights our country’s gods,

Thou mad’st in presence of our royal father.

Arib. Yes, I remember well the impious oath,

Hardly extorted from my trembling youth,

When burning with misguided zeal the king

Compell’d my knee to bend before his gods,

And forc’d us both to swear to what we knew not.

King. Now by the honours of the Saxon race,

“ A long and venerable line of heroes !”

I swear thou art abandon’d, lost to honour,

“ And fall’n from ev’ry great and godlike thought.

“ Some whining coward priest has wrought upon thee,

“ And drawn thee from our brave forefathers’ faith,”

False to our gods as to thy king and brother.

Arib. ’Tis much beneath my courage and my truth

To borrow any mean disguise from falsehood :

No !—’t is my glory that the Christian light

Has dawn’d, like day, upon my darker mind,

And taught my soul the noblest use of reason,

“ Taught her to soar aloft, to search, to know,

“ That vast eternal fountain of her being,”

Then warm with indignation to despise

The things you call our country’s gods, to scorn

And trample on their ignominious altars.

King. ’Tis well Sir—Impious boy !—Ye Saxon gods !

And thou, oh royal Hengist ! whose dread will

And injur’d majesty I now assert,

Hear and be present to my justice ; hear me

While thus I vow to your offended deities
 This traitor's life : he dies, nor ought on earth
 Saves his devoted head. One to the priests, [*Exit a Gent.*
 Bid 'em be swift, and dress their bloody altars
 With ev'ry circumstance of tragick pomp,
 To-day a royal victim bleeds upon 'em :
 Rich shall the smoke and steeming gore ascend
 To glut the vengeance of our angry gods.

Rod. " At once ten thousand racking passions tear me,
 " And my heart heaves as it would burst my bosom."
 Oh! can I, can I, hear him doom'd to death,
 Nor stir nor breathe one single sound to save him?
 It won't be—and my fierce haughty soul,
 Whate'er she suffers, still disdains to bend,
 To sue to the " curs'd" hated tyrant King.
 Oh love! oh glory!—Wouldst thou die thus tamely?

[*To Aribert.*

Is life so small a thing, so mean a boon,
 As is not worth the asking?—" Thou art silent;
 " Wilt thou not plead for life?"—Entreat the tyrant,
 And waken nature in his iron heart.

Arib. Life has so little in it good or pleasing,
 That since it seems not worth a brother's care
 'Tis hardly worth my asking.

King. Seize him guards
 And bear him to his fate.

[*Guards seize Aribert and bear him off.*

Rod. Yet, Hengist, know
 If thou shalt dare to touch his precious life,
 Know that the gods and Rodogune prepare
 The sharpest scourges of vindictive war :
 Fly where thou wilt the sword shall still pursue
 With vengeance to a brother's murder due :
 Driv'n out from man, and mark'd for publick scorn,
 Thy ravish'd sceptre vainly shalt thou mourn;
 And when at length thy wretched life shall cease,
 When in the silent grave thou hop'st for peace,
 Think not the grave shall hide thy hated head,
 Still, still I will pursue thy fleeting shade ;
 I curs'd thee living and I'll plague thee dead.

[*Exit Rod.*

King. "On to the temple with him:" let her rave
 And prophesy ten thousand thousand horrors;
 I could join with her now, and bid 'em come;
 They fit the present fury of my soul.
 "The stings of love and rage are fix'd within,
 "And drive me on to madness. Earthquakes, whirlwinds,
 "A gen'ral wreck of Nature, now would please me!"
 For oh! not all the driving wintry war,
 When the storm groans and bellows from afar,
 "When thro' the gloom the glancing lightnings fly,
 "Heavy the rattling thunders roll on high,
 "And seas and earth mix with the dusky sky," }
 Not all those warring elements we fear
 Are equal to the inborn tempest here,
 Fierce as the thoughts which mortal man control
 When love and rage contend and tear the lab'ring soul.
Exeunt.

ACT IV.

*"The Scene is a temple adorned according to the superstition
 "of the ancient Saxons; in the middle are placed their three
 "principal idols Thor, Woden, and Freya. Musick is
 "heard at a distance, as of the priests preparing for the sa-
 "crifice."*

SCENE, a prison.

Enter ARIBERT.

ARIBERT.

ALL night the bloody priests, a dreadful band!
 Have watch'd, intent upon their horrid rites,
 "With many a dire and execrable pray'r
 "Calling the fiends beneath, the sullen demons
 "That dwell in darkness deep, and, foes to man,
 "Delight in reeking streams of human gore:
 "Now huddled on a heap they murmur'd hoarse,
 "And hissing whisper'd round their mystick charms;
 "And now, as if by sudden madness struck,
 "With screaming shrill they shook the vaulted roof,
 "And vex'd the still, the silent, solemn, midnight.
 "Such, sure, in everlasting flames below,

"Such are the groans of poor lamenting ghosts,
 "And such the howlings of the last despair.
 "Anon to sounds of wo and magick strings
 "They danc'd in wild fantastick measures round,
 "Then all at once they bent their ghastly visages
 "On me, and yelling thrice they cry'd out Aribert!"
 I have endur'd their horrors—And at length
 See the night wears away, and cheerful morn,
 All sweet and fresh, spreads from the rosy east;
 Fair nature seems reviv'd, and ev'n my heart
 Sits light and jocund at the day's return,
 And fearless waits an end of all its sufferings.

Enter one of the Guards, he delivers a letter to Aribert.

Guard. From Oswald this, on peril of my life,
 I have engag'd to render to your hands. [Exit.

Arib. reads.] "Seofrid has been just to his word; he has
 "delivered the fair Ethelinda to my charge: we have hap-
 "pily past all the guards, and hope in two hours to reach
 "the Britons' camp."

"From your faithful Oswald."

Then thou hast nothing left on earth, my soul,
 Worthy thy farther care. Why do I stay,
 Why linger then, and want my heav'n so long?
 To live is to continue to be wretched,
 And robs me of a great and glorious death.

Enter RODOGUNE with an Officer; he speaks to her entering.

Off. Thus Offa to his beauteous sister sends;
 Depend upon a brother's love and care
 To further all you wish.

Rod. 'Tis well; be near, [Exit Officer.

And wait my farther order. "See, my heart,
 "See there thy dearest choice, thy fond desire:"
 See with how clear a brow, what cheerful grace,
 With all his native sweetness undisturb'd,
 The noble youth attends his harder fate!
 I came to join my friendly grief with your's, [To Aribert.
 To curse your tyrant brother, and deplore
 Your youthful hopes thus all untimely blasted:
 But you, I see, have learn'd to scorn your danger;
 You wear a face of triumph not of mourning.
 Has death so little in it?

Arib. Oh! 't is nothing
 To minds that weigh it well: the vulgar fear it,
 And yet they know not why, since never any
 Did from that dark and doubtful land as yet
 Turn back again to tell us 't is a pain.
 To me it seems like a long wish'd-for happiness
 Beyond what ev'n our expectation paints:
 'Tis comfort to the soul, 'tis peace, 'tis rest;
 "It comes like slumber to the sick man's eyes;
 "Burning and restless with a fever's rage
 "All night he tosses on his weary bed,
 "He tells the tedious minutes as they pass,
 "And turns, and turns, and seeks for ease in vain;
 "But if at morning's dawn sweet sleep falls on him,
 "Think with what pleasure he resigns his senses,
 "Sinks to his pillow, and forgets his pain!"

Rod. Perhaps it may be such a state of indolence,
 But sure the active soul should therefore fear it.
 "The gods have dealt unjustly with their creatures
 "If barely they bestow a wretched being,
 "And scatter not some pleasures with the pain
 "To make it worth their keeping." Is there nothing
 Could make you wish to live?

Arib. Oh, yes! there is,
 There is a blessing I could wish to live for,
 To live for years, for ages, to enjoy it;
 But far, alas! divided from my arms,
 It leaves the world a wilderness before me,
 With nothing worth desiring.

Rod. "Dull and cold!
 "Or cold at least to me; dull, dull indifference." [*Aside.*]
 What if some pitying pow'r look down from heav'n
 And kindly visit your afflicted fortunes?
 What if it send some unexpected aid,
 "Some gen'rous heart and some prevailing hand
 "Willing to save and mighty to defend,
 "Who from the gloomy confines of the grave
 "Timely shall snatch shall bring you back to life,"
 And raise you up to empire and to love?

Arib. The wretched have few friends, at least on earth;
 Then what have I to hope?

Rod. Hope ev'ry thing,

"Hope all that merit such as your's may claim,
 "Such as commands the world, exacts their homage,
 "And makes ev'n all the good and brave your friends.

Arib. "And can you then vouchsafe to flatter misery,
 "T' enrich so fall'n so lost a thing as I am.
 "With the sweet breath of praise? So pious virgins
 "Rob the whole spring to make their garlands fine,
 "Then hang them on a senseless marble tomb."

Rod. A burning purple flushes o'er my face,
 And shame forbids my tongue, or I would say
 That I—oh Aribert!—I am thy friend.
 Yet wherefore should I blush to own the thought?
 For who—who would not be the friend of Aribert?

Arib. Why is this wondrous goodness lost on me?
 Why is this bounty lavish'd on a bankrupt,
 Who has not left another hour of life
 To pay the mighty debt?

Rod. "Oh! let me yet,
 "Yet add to it, and swell the sum yet higher,
 "Nor doubt but Fate shall find the means to pay it."
 Know then that I have pass'd this livelong night
 Sleepless and anxious with my cares for thee:
 The gods have sure approv'd the pious thought,
 And crown'd it with success, since I have gain'd
 Alfred, the chief of mighty Woden's priests,
 To find a certain way for thy escape.
 One of the sacred habits is at hand
 Prepar'd for thy disguise; the holy man
 Attends to guide thee to my brother's camp:
 Myself—oh! yet lie still my beating heart— *[Aside.]*
 Whatever dangers chance, myself will be
 The partner and the guardian of thy flight.

Arib. Now what return to make—Oh! let me sink
 With all these warring thoughts together in me,
 Blushing to earth, and hide the vast confusion!

Rod. Ye gods! he answers not, but hangs his head
 In sullen silence—See! he turns away,
 And bends his gloomy visage to the earth.
 To what am I betray'd? Oh shame, dishonour,
 And more than woman's weakness! he has seen me,
 Seen my fond heart, and scorns the easy prize.
 "Blast me, ye lightnings! strike me to the centre,

" Drive, drive me down, down to the depths beneath;
 " Let me not live nor think—let me not think,
 " For I have been despis'd—Ten thousand thousand,
 " And yet ten thousand curses—Oh! my folly—

Arib. " Thus let me fall thus lowly to the earth,

[*Kneeling.*

" In humble adoration of your goodness,
 " Thus with my latest accents breathe your name,
 " And bless you ere I die." Oh Rodogune,
 Fair royal maid! to thee be all thy wishes,
 Content and everlasting peace dwell with thee,
 And ev'ry joy be thine, nor let one thought
 Of this ungrateful this unhappy Aribert
 Remain behind to call a sudden sigh
 Or stain thee with a tear. Behold I go,
 Doom'd by eternal Fate, to my long rest;
 Then let my name too die, sink to oblivion,
 And sleep in silence with me in the grave.

Rod. Dost thou not wish to live?

Arib. I cannot.

Rod. Why?

Behold I give thee life.

Arib. And therefore—oh!

Therefore I cannot take it! I dare die,
 But dare not be oblig'd. I dare not owe
 What I can never render back. *Ethelinda!*

Rod. " Confusion!"

Is then the blessing life become a curse
 When offer'd to thee by my baleful hand?

Arib. " Oh no! for you are all that's good and gracious;
 " Nature, that makes your sex the joy of ours,
 " Made you the pride of both; she gave you sweetness
 " So mix'd with strength, with majesty so rais'd,
 " To make the willing world confess your empire,
 " And love while they obey: nor staid she there,
 " But to the body fitted so the mind
 " As each were fashion'd singly to excel,
 " As if so fair a form disdain'd to harbour
 " A soul less great, and that great soul could find
 " Nothing so like the heav'n from whence it came
 " As that fair form to dwell in.

Rod. " Soothing sounds!

" Delightful flattery from him we love ;

" But what are these to my impatient hopes ? [*Aside.*

Arib. " Yet wherefore should this mighty mass of wealth

" Be vainly plac'd before my wond'ring eyes,

" Since I must ne'er possess it, since my heart

" Once giv'n can ne'er return, can know no name

" But Ethelinda, only Ethelinda ?

" Fix'd to its choice, and obstinately constant,

" It listens not to any other call :

" So rigid hermits that forsake the world

" Are deaf to glory, greatness, pomps, and pleasures ;

" Severe in zeal, and insolently pious, .

" They let attending princes vainly wait,

" Knock at their cells, and lure them forth in vain."

Rod. How is she form'd, with what superiour grace,

This rival of my love ? What envious god,

In scorn of Nature's wretched works below,

Improv'd and made her more than half divine ?

" How has he taught her lips to breathe ambrosia ?

" How dy'd her blushes with the morning's red,

" And cloth'd her with the fairest beams of light,"

To make her shine beyond me ?

Arib. Spare the theme.

Rod. " But then her mind ! Ye Gods ! which of you all

" Could make that great and fit to rival mine ?

" What more than heav'nly fire informs the mass ?"

Has she a soul can dare beyond our sex,

Beyond ev'n man himself, can dare like mine ?

Can she resolve to bear the secret stings

Of shame and conscious pride, distracting rage,

And all the deadly pangs of love despis'd ?

Oh no ! she cannot, nature cannot bear it ; [*Weeping,*

" It sinks ev'n me, the torrent drives me down,

" The native greatness of my spirit fails,

" Thus melts, and thus runs gushing thro' my eyes,

" The floods of sorrow drown my dying voice,

" And I can only call thee—cruel Aribert !

Arib. " Oh thou, just Heav'n ! if mortal man may dare

" To look into thy great decrees, thy fate,

" Were it not better I had never been

" Than thus to bring affliction and misfortune,

" Thus curse what thou hadst made so good and fair !

Rod. But see the King and cruel train appear,
 Nor can I save thee now: thou hast thy wish; [*To Arib.*
 But what remains for me? "My heart beats fast,
 "And swells impatient at the tyrant's sight:
 "My blood, erewhile at ebb, now flows again,
 "And with new rage I burn." Since love is lost
 Come thou, Revenge! succeed thou to my bosom,
 And reign in all my soul. Yes, I will find her,
 This fatal she, for whom I am despis'd.
 Look that she be your masterpiece ye Gods!
 Let each celestial hand some grace impart
 To this rare pattern of your forming art;
 Such may she be my jealous rage to move,
 Such as you never made till now to prove
 A victim worthy my offended love. *Exit Rod.*

Enter at the other door the KING, Guards, and other Attendants.

King. Hast thou bethought thee yet perfidious boy?
 Won't thou yet render back thy theft? Consider
 The precipice is just beneath thy feet;
 'Tis but a moment and I dash thee off
 To plunge for ever in eternal darkness.
 Somewhat like Nature has been busy here,
 And made a struggle for thee in my soul;
 Restore my love, and be again my brother.

Arib. "Rage and the violence of lawless passion
 "Have blinded your clear reason, wherefore else
 "This frantick wild demand?" What! should I yield,
 Give up my love, my wife, my Ethelinda,
 To an incestuous brother's dire embrace?
 Oh horror!—But to bar the impious thought,
 Know Heav'n and brave Ambrosius are her guard:
 Ere this her flight hath reach'd the Britons' camp,
 And found her safety there.

King. Fled to the Britons!
 Oh most accursed traitor! Let her fly
 Far as the early day'spring in the east,
 "Or to the utmost ocean, where the sun
 "Descends to other skies and worlds unknown,"
 Ev'n thither shall my love take wing and follow
 To seize the flying fair. The Britons!—Gods!
 Shall they withhold her?—first my arms shall shake

Their island to the centre. But for thee,
Think'st thou to awe me with that phantom incest?
Such empty names may fright thy coward soul,
But know that mine disdains 'em. Bind him straight.

[To the Priests.

"I won't lose another thought about thee. [To Aribert.

"Begin the rites,"

And drag him to yon' holy altar, where
Stand ministring priests to die the hallow'd steel
Deep in his Christian blood. The gods demand him.

Arib. Why then, no more: but if we meet again,
As when the day of great account shall come
Perhaps we may, may'st thou find mercy there
More than thou shew'st thy brother here. Farewell.

King. "Farewell." To death with him, "and end the
dreamer. [The Priests bind Aribert, and lead him to
the altar, while the solemn music is playing."

Enter SEOFRID.

Seof. Stay! "Haste and break off your inauspicious
The instant dangers summon you away, [rites;"
Destruction threatens in our frightened streets,
And the gods call to arms.

King. What means the fear
That trembles in thy pale thy haggard visage?
Speak out, and ease this labour of thy soul.

Seof. Oh fly my Lord! the torrent grows upon us,
And while I speak we're lost: fierce Offa comes,
From ev'ry part his crowding ensigns enter,
And this way waving bend. With idle arms
Your soldiers careless stand and bid 'em pass;
"Some join, but all refuse to arm against 'em;
"They call 'em Friends, Companions, and their Country-
A chosen band, led by the haughty princess, [men."
Imperious Rodogune, move swiftly hither
To intercept your passage to the palace:
That only strength is left, then fly to reach it.

King. Curs'd chance! but haste, dispatch that traitor
They sha' not bar my vengeance. [straight;

Seof. Sacred Sir!
Think only on your safety. For the prince
Your crown, but more your love, a thousand reasons,

All urge you to defer his fate : time presses,
Or I could speak 'em plain.

King. Then hear me Soldier ;
I give him to thy charge.

Scot. " They come my Lord."

[*Shout.*

King. Look to him well, for by yon' dreadful altars
Thy life shall pay for his if he escape :
First kill him, plunge thy poignard in his bosom,
And see thy King reveng'd.

[*Exeunt King, Scofrid, Guards, and Attendants.*

First Of. Be cheer'd my Lord,
Nor keep one doubt of me ; I am your slave.
The King is fled, and with him all your dangers :
Fate has reserv'd you for some glorious purpose,
And see your guardian goddess comes to save you,
To break your bonds, and make you ever happy.

Enter RODOGUNE and Soldiers.

Rod. Well have our arms prevail'd ; behold he lives,
Ungrateful as he is, by me he lives !

Do I not come with too officious haste

[*To Aribert.*

Once more to press the burden life upon you,
To offer with an idiot's importunity
The nauseous benefit you scorn'd before ?

Arib. If I refus'd the blessing from your hands
Think it not rudely done with sullen pride,
Since life and you are two of Heav'n's best gifts ;
Yet both should be receiv'd ; both kept, with honour.

Rod. " However live—yes, I will bid thee live ;
" No matter what ensues. Fly far away,
" Forget me ; blot my name from thy remembrance,
" And think thou ow'st me nothing—What ! in bonds !
" Well was the task reserv'd for me : but thus
" I break thy chain——would I could break my own."

[*Aside.*

Enter an Officer.

Off. A party of our horse that late went forth
To mark the order of the Britons' camp
Met in their course some servants of the King,
For so they call'd themselves : ours judg'd 'em traitors,
And would have seiz'd, as flying to the foe :
After a sharp resistance some escap'd,

The rest, for so your princely brother wills,
Without attend your order.

Rod. Let 'em enter.

A woman!

Enter ETHELINDA, with Guards.

Ethel. Is there then an end of sorrows?

[*Running to Aribert.*

Has then that cruel Chance that long pursu'd me,
That vex'd me with her various malice long,
Been kind at last, and blest me to my wish,
Lodg'd me once more within thy faithful arms!

Arib. Oh, my foreboding heart! oh, fatal meeting!

Ethel. Why droops my love, my Lord, my Aribert?
Why dost thou sigh and press me? and oh! wherefore,
Wherefore these tears that stain thy manly visage?
They told me Heav'n had strove for thy deliverance,
Had rais'd thee up some kind some great preserver,
To save thee from thy cruel brother's hand:
Why therefore dost thou mourn when thou art blest?
Or does some new affliction wound thee? say;
Perhaps I am the cause.

Rod. By all the tortures,
The pangs, that rend my groaning breast, 't is she,
My curs'd my happy rival! "See the Siren,
"See how with eager eyes he drinks her charms;
"Mark how he listens to her sweet allurements;
"She winds herself about his easy heart,
"And melts him with her soft enchanting tongue."

Ethel. Wot thou not answer yet?

Arib. Oh Ethelinda!

Why art thou here? is this the Britons' camp?
Is Lucius here? hast thou a brother here
To guard thy helpless innocence from wrong?

Ethel. Have I not thee?

Arib. Me! ——— what can I do for thee?

For we are wretched both.

Rod. I'll doubt no more:

My jealous heart confesses her its foe,
And beats and rises, eager to oppose her;
Nor shall she triumph o'er me: "No, ye Gods!

"If I am doom'd by you to be a wretch

"She too shall suffer with me." Prince, you seem [*To Aribert.*

To know this pris'ner, whom the Saxon chiefs
 Accuse of flying to our foes the Britons;
 However, I will think more nobly of you
 Than to believe you conscious of the treason;
 Nor can you grieve if justice dooms her to
 That fate she has deserv'd. Bear her to death.

[To the Guard.

Ethel. Alas! to death!—what mean you? say by what
 Unknown unwilling crime have I offended?
 To you, fair Princess! since 'tis you that judge me,
 "Tho' now this moment to my eyes first known,"
 To you I bend, to you I will appeal, [Kneeling.
 And learn my crime from you.

Arib. Learn it from me;
 I am thy crime; 'tis Aribert destroys thee.

Ethel. If thou art my offence I've sinn'd indeed,
 Ev'n to a vast and numberless account,
 For from the time when I beheld thee first [To Aribert.
 My soul has not one moment been without thee;
 Still thou hast been my wish, my constant thought,
 Like light, the daily blessing of my eyes,
 And the dear dream of all my sweetest slumbers.

Rod. Oh the distracting thought!

Ethel. Nor will you think it [To Rodogune.
 A crime to love, "for that I love is true."
 In your fair eyes I read your native goodness.
 Haply some noble youth shall in your breast
 Kindle the pure the gentle flame, and prove
 As dear to you as Aribert to me;
 "Would it be just that you should die for loving?
 "Think but on that and I shall find your pity,
 "For pity sure and mercy dwell with love."

Rod. Be dumb for ever, let the hand of Death
 Close thy bewitching eyes and seal thy lips,
 That thou may'st look and talk no more delusion;
 For oh! thy ev'ry glance, each sound, shoots thro' me,
 And kills my very heart. Hence, bear her hence.
 "My peace is lost for ever—but she dies."—

Arib. Oh, hold! "for"—

Rod. "Wherefore dost thou catch my garment?
 "Thou that hast set me on the rack, com'st thou

"To double all my pains, and with new terrors
"Dreadful to shake my agonizing soul?"

Arib. What shall I say to move thee?

Rod. Talk for ever,

Winds shall be still and seas forget to roar,
The din of babbling crowds and peopled cities,
All shall be hush'd as death while thou art speaking,
For there is musick in thy voice.

Arib. Then hear me,

With gentlest patience, with compassion, hear me ;
Thus while I fall before thee, grasp thee thus,
Thus with a bleeding heart and streaming eyes
Implore thee for my Ethelinda's life.

Rod. Tho' thou were dearer to my doting eyes
Than all they knew besides, tho' I could hear thee
While ages past away, yet by the gods,
If such there are, who rule o'er love and jealousy,
"And swell our heaving breasts with mortal passions,"
I swear she dies, my hated rival dies.

Arib. Then I have only one request to make,
Which sha' not be deny'd ; to share one fate,
And die with her I love.

Rod. Ungrateful wretch !

Yet I would make thy life my care——

Arib. "No more:

"Now I scorn life indeed. Tho' you had beauty
"More than the great Creator's bounteous hand
"Bestow'd on all his various works together,
"Tho' all ambition asks, the kingly purple," [to give,
"Tho' life, tho' glory, "and" wealth and pow'r, were your's
"Tho' length of days and health were in your hand,
And all were to be mine, yet I would chuse
To turn the gift with indignation back,
And rather fold my Ethelinda thus,
And sleep for ever with her in the grave.

Rod. Then take thy wish, and let both die together.
Yes, I will tear thee from my fond remembrance,
And be at ease for ever.

Ethel. Oh my love!

What can I pay thee back for all this truth?

What but, like thee, to triumph in my fate,

And think it more than life to die with thee.

"Haste then, ye Virgins! break the tender turf,

"And let your chaster hands prepare the bed

"Where my dear lord and I must rest together ;

"Then let the myrtle and the rose be strow'd,

"For 't is my second better bridal day.

"On my cold bosom let his head be laid,

"And look that none disturb us

"Till the last trumpet's sound break our long sleep

"And calls us up to everlasting bliss."

Rod. Hence with 'em, take 'em, drive 'em from my sight,
The fatal pair——— [Exit all but Rod.

That look shall be my last.

I feel my soul impatient of its bondage,

Disdaining this unworthy idle passion,

And struggling to be free. Now, now it shoots,

It tow'rs upon the wing to crowns and empire,

While love and Aribert, those meaner names,

Are left far, far behind, and lost for ever.

"So if by chance the eagle's noble offspring,

"Ta'en in the nest, becomes some peasant's prize,

"Compell'd a while he bears his cage and chains,

"And like a pris'ner with the clown remains ;

"But when his plumes shoot forth and pinions swell

"He quits the rustick and his homely cell,

"Breaks from his bonds, and in the face of day

"Full in the sun's bright beams he soars away,

"Delights thro' heav'n's wide pathless ways to go,

"Plays with Jove's shafts and grasps his dreadful bow,

"Dwells with immortal gods and scorns the world below." }

[Exit

ACT V.

SCENE, *the palace.*

Enter the KING and SEOFRID.

KING.

"No! I will follow the fond chase no more,
 "No more pursue the flying phantom glory,
 "But lay me down and rest in fullen peace,
 "Secure of all events to come, and careless
 "If the gods guide the world by Fate or Fortune:
 "Let 'em take back the worthless crown they gave
 "Since they refuse their better blessings to me."

Seof. If not to glory yet awake to love,
 And tho' regardless of your royal state
 Yet live for Ethelinda, live to save her,
 Doom'd by the cruel Rodogune to die!
 Helpless and desolate methinks she stands,
 And calls you to her aid.

King. "What! doom'd to die!
 "Shall those dear glowing beauties then grow cold,
 "Pale, stiff, and cold? nor shall I fold her once?
 "Shall she not pant beneath my strong embrace,
 "Swell to desire, and meet my furious joy?
 "Shall she not breathe, and look, and sigh, and murmur,
 "Till I am lost for ever, sunk in ecstasies,
 "And bury'd in ten thousand thousand sweets?
 "What! shall she die? No by the god of Arms,
 "No—I will"—

Seofrid, yes! I'll once more rouse me to the war,
 And snatch her from her fate.

Seof. Then hear the means.
 By which the gods preserve your crown and love.
 Oswald, of all our Saxon chiefs the first
 And nearest to your brother's heart, had drawn
 The chosen strength of all the British youth,
 Under the leading of the gallant Lucius,
 To save the prince from your impending wrath;
 By secret marches they are near advanc'd,
 And meant this night to make their bold attempt.

King. How favours this my purpose?

Seof. Thus, my Lord;
 I have prevail'd their force shall join with all
 Those faithful Saxons who are still your subjects:
 Your foes, fierce Offa and his haughty sister,
 Secure and insolent with new successes,
 Despise your numbers and inferiour strength,
 And may this night with ease become your prey:
 Oswald attends without to learn your pleasure,
 And bear it to the valiant British chiefs.

King. The Britons! Gods!—the nation which I hate:
 That Oswald too!—The traitor still has been
 A vow'd the slave of Aribert, his creature,
 His bosom fawning parasite—No matter;
 They serve the present purpose of my heart,
 And I will use 'em now. Taught by thy arts
 I will look kindly on the wretch I loathe,
 And smile on him I destine to destruction.
 Bid him approach.

[*Exit Seofrid, and reenter with Oswald.*]

Seof. Your valiant Oswald, Sir.

King. Your friend has spoke at large your bold design,
 Worthy your courage and your princely friend;
 And howsoe'er the meddling hand of Chance
 Has sown th' unlucky seeds of strife between us,
 Yet I have still a brother's part in Aribert,
 Nor shall my hand be slow to lead you on
 Till we have driv'n these haughty inmates forth,
 And independent fix'd that sov'reign right
 Which our brave fathers fought to gain in Britain.

Osw. With honourable purpose are we come,
 With friendly greeting from the Britons' king,
 And the fair offer of an equal peace.
 This only he demands; send back the troops—
 Which late arriv'd with Offa, now your foe—
 As well as his, and set your princely brother,
 With the fair Ethelinda, safe and free.
 These just conditions once confirm'd to Lucius:
 Ambrosius is the friend of royal Hengist:
 The Britons then shall join their arms with yours
 To drive out these inhospitable guests,
 And leave you peaceful lord of fruitful Kent,
 The first possession of your warlike father.

King. In friendly part take we his proffer'd love.
Bear this our signet to the gallant Lucius,

[*Giving his ring to Oswald.*]

Our bond and pledge of peace, "which in full form
"We will confirm soon as the present danger
"Is well remov'd, and better time allows."

Haste thou to join our valiant friends the Britons;
My faithful Seofrid shall soon attend you
With full instructions for your private march
And means of entrance here, with the whole order
In which we mean t' attack the common foe.

Osw. I go, my Lord, and may the gods befriend us!

[*Exit.*]

[*The King looks after Oswald, then turns and walks two or three times hastily across the stage.*]

Seof. Ha! whence this sudden start? [*Aside.*] That wrathful frown,

Your eyes fierce glancing, and your changing visage,
Now pale as death, now purpled o'er with flame,
Give me to know your passions are at odds,
And your whole soul is up in arms within.

King. Oh! thou hast read me right, hast seen me well;
To thee I have thrown off that mask I wore,

And now the secret workings of my brain
Stand all reveal'd to thee. "I tell thee, Seofrid,

"There never was a medley of such thinking:

"Ambition, hatred, mischief, and revenge,

"Gather like clouds on clouds; and then anon

"Love, like a golden beam of light, shoots thro',

"Smiles on the gloom, and my heart bounds with pleasure."

But 't is no time for talk. To Siwald fly,

My soldier and my servant often try'd;

Bid him draw out a hundred chosen horse,

And hold 'em ready by the night's first fall:

Let 'em be all of courage well approv'd,

Such as dare follow wheresoe'er I lead,

Where'er this night or Fate or Love shall bear me.

Seof. I hasten to obey you: but alas!

Might your old man have leave to speak his fears—

King. I read thy care for me in all those fears,

But be not wise too much. Oft' thou hast told me

Love is a base, unmanly, whining, passion;

This night I mean to prove it and forsake it.

"I was, 'tis true, the slave of this soft folly,

"And waited at an awful abject distance,

"Refrain'd by idle rules which scornful Beauty

"And sullen honour dictate; but no more:"

No! by our gods I'll suffer it no more.

Seof. Where will this fury drive you?

King. To my heav'n,

To Ethelinda's arms. This very ev'ning,

While the deluded Britons urge our foes,

And wreak my vengeance on the Saxon Offa,

Amidst the first disorder of the fray

'Twill not be hard to seize the weeping fair,

And while the fighting fools contend in vain

With all the wings the god of Love can lend

To bear her far away.

Seof. Ha!—whither mean you

To bend this rash, I fear, this fatal flight?

King. Near where the Medway rolls her gentle waves.

To meet the Thames in his imperial stream

Thou know'st I have a castle of such strength

As well may scorn the menace of a siege,

Thither I mean to bear my lovely prize,

And in despite of all the envious world

There riot in her arms. But break we off.

Haste to perform my orders, and then follow

And share in all the fortunes of thy king. [*Exit King.*]

Seof. "Fools that we are! to vex the lab'ring brain

"And waste decaying nature thus with thought,

"To keep the weary spirits waking still,

"To goad and drive 'em in eternal rounds

"Of restless racking care! 'tis all in vain!

"Blind goddess, Chance, henceforth I follow thee:

"The politicians of the world may talk,

"May make a mighty bustle with their foresight,

"Their schemes and arts; their wisdom is thy slave.

[*Exit Seofrid.*]

SCENE changes to a temple.

Enter ARIBERT and ETHELINDA.

Ethel. When this the last of all our days of sorrow
Flies fast and hastens to fulfil its course,

When the blest hour of death at length is near,
 Why dost thou mourn? when that good time is come
 When we shall weep no more, but live for ever
 In that dear place where no misfortunes come,
 Where age, and want, and sickness, are not known,
 And where this wicked world shall cease from troubling,
 When thick descending angels crowd the air,
 And wait with crowns of glory to reward us,
 Why art thou sad my love, my lord, my Aribert?

Arib. "It comes, indeed the cruel moment comes,
 "That must divide our faithful loves for ever.
 "A few short minutes more and both shall perish,
 "Sink to the place where all things are forgotten:
 "Our youth and fair affections shall be barren,
 "Shall know no joys which other lovers know,
 "Shall leave no name behind us; no posterity,
 "Only the sad remembrance of our woes,
 "To draw a tear from each who reads our story,
 "And dost thou ask me wherefore I am sad?

Ethel. "'Tis hard indeed, 't is very hard to part.
 "Tho' my heart grieves to want its heav'n so long,
 "Pants for its bliss, and sickens with delay,
 "Yet I could be content to live for thee:
 "Yes, I will own thy image stands before me
 "And intercepts my journey to the stars,
 "Calls back the fervent breathings of my soul
 "To earth and thee; with longing looks I turn,
 "Forget my flight and linger here below."

Arib. Is it decreed by Heav'n's eternal will
 That none shall pass the golden gates above
 But those who sorrow here? Must we be wretched,
 Must we be drown'd in many floods of tears
 To wash our deep our inborn stains away,
 Or never see the saints and taste their joys?

Ethel. The great o'erruling Author of our beings
 Deals with his creature man in various ways,
 Gracious and good in all: some feel the rod,
 And own, like us, the Father's chast'ning hand;
 "Sev'n times, like gold, they pass the purging flame,
 "And are at last refin'd; while gently some
 "Tread all the paths of life without a rub;
 "With honour, health, with friends and plenty, blest'd,

" Their years roll round in innocence and ease ;
 " Hoary at length, and in a good old age,"
 They go declining to the grave in peace,
 And change their pleasures here for joys above.

Arib. " To have so many blessings heap'd on me
 " Transcends my wish. I ask'd but only thee :
 " Give me, I said, but life and Ethelinda ;
 " Let us but run the common course together,
 " Grow kindly old in one another's arms,
 " And take us to thy mercy then good Heav'n !
 " But Heav'n thought that too much.

Ethel. " If our dear hopes,
 " If what we value most on earth, our loves,
 " Are blasted thus by Death's untimely hand,
 " If nothing good remains for us below,
 " So much the rather let us turn our thoughts
 " To seek beyond the stars our better portion,
 " That wondrous bliss which Heav'n reserves in store
 " Well to reward us for our losses here,
 " That bliss which Heav'n, and only Heav'n, can give,
 " Which shall be more to thee than Ethelinda,
 " And more to me—Oh, vast excess of happiness !
 " Where shall my soul make room for more than Aribert !"

Enter RODOGUNE and Attendants.

Rod. If while she lives still I am doom'd to suffer
 Why am I cruel to myself?—No more—
 'Tis foolish pity—How secure of conquest
 The soft enchantress looks ! But be at peace,
 Beat not my heart ! for she shall fall thy victim.
 Appear, ye priests ! ye dreadful holy men,
 " Ye ministers of the gods' wrath and mine !"
 Appear, and seize your sacrifice, this Christian ;
 Bear her to death, and let her blood atone
 For all the mischiefs of her eyes and tongue.

[*Solemn music.*

[*The SCENE draws and discovers the inner part of the temple ;
 a fire is prepared on one of the altars, near it are placed a
 rack, knives, axes, and other instruments of torture, several
 priests attending as for a sacrifice.*

Arib. See where death comes array'd in all its terrours,
 The rack, consuming flames, and wounding steel.
 Your cruel triumph had not been complete.

Without this pomp of horror. Come, begin:
Tear off my robes, and bind me to the rack;
Stretch out my corded sinews till they burst,
And let your knives drink deep the flowing blood:
You shall behold how a prince ought to die,
And what a Christian dares to suffer.

[*The Guards seize Aribert and Ethelinda.*]

Priest. Hold!—

The Prince's fate is yet deferr'd: the woman
Is first ordain'd to suffer—Ere she fall
A victim to our gods she must kneel to 'em
Or prove the torture.

Ethel. I disdain those gods.

Off. Bind her straight and bear her to the rack.

Arib. What her!—Oh merciless!

Ethel. Oh, stay me not, my love! with joy I go
To prove the bitter pains of death before thee,
And lead thee on in the triumphant way.

Arib. And can my eyes endure it! to behold
Thy tender body torn? these dear soft arms,
That oft' have wreath'd their snowy folds about me,
Distorted, bent, and broke with rending pain?
Oh Rodogune! read, read in my full eyes
More than my tongue can speak, and spare my love!—

Rod. “And couldst thou find no other name but that?
“Thy love!—Oh fatal, curs'd, distracting, sound!”
No, I will steel my heart against thy pray'r,
And whisper to myself with fullen pleasure
The gods are just at length, and thou shalt feel
Pains such as I have known.

Arib. Let me but die;
Cut off this hated object from your sight——

Rod. “Nor that—for know that I can too deny,
“And make thee mourn thy coldness and disdain.”
No more! I'll hear no more?

Arib. “They bind her! see!
“See with rude cords they strain her tender limbs
“Till the red drops start from their swelling channels,
“And with fresh crimson paint her dying paleness.

“Oh, all ye host of heav'n! ye saints and angels!
Ethel. “Oh, stay thy tears, and mourn no more for me,
“Nor fear the weakness of my woman's soul,

" For I am arm'd and equal to the combat.
 " In vain they lavish all their cruel arts,
 " And bind this feeble body here in vain ;
 " The free impassive soul mounts on the wing
 " Beyond the reach of racks and tort'ring flames,
 " And scorns their tyranny"—Oh follow thou!
 Be constant to the last, be fix'd, my Aribert!
 'Tis but a short, short passage to the stars :
 Oh, follow thou! nor let me want thee long,
 And search the blissful regions round in vain.

[*Solemn music.*]

" *Enter an Officer.*

Off. " Arm, royal maid! and take to your defence ;
 " The King with sudden fury sallies forth,
 " And drives our outmost guards with foul confusion.
 " *Rod.* The King! what frenzy brings the madman on
 " Thus headlong to his fate?—But let him come,
 " His death shall fill my triumph—wealth and honours,
 " The noblest best reward, shall wait the man
 " Whose lucky sword shall take his hated head."

Enter a second Officer, his sword drawn.

Second Off. Hengist is here ; he bears down all before
 The Britons too have joined their arms to his, [him:
 And this way bend their force.

Rod. Fly to my brother, [To her Attendants.
 And call him to our aid.

[*Shouts within, and clashing of swords.*]

King within.] Slave, give me way,
 " Or I will tear thy soul"—
Sold. within.] You pass not here.
Seof. within.] What, know'st thou not the King?—
 Oh, cursed villain!

*Enter the KING wounded, SEOFRID, OSWALD, and Soldiers
 with their swords drawn. Oswald runs to Aribert.*

Seof. Perdition on his hand—you bleed, my Lord!

King. My blood flows fast—What, can I languish now!
 So near my wish—Lend me thy arm, old Seofrid,
 To bear me to her—Ha! bound to the rack!
 Merciless dogs—ye most pernicious slaves!
 " And stand ye stupid, haggard, and amaz'd?"
 Fly swift as thought, and set her free this moment,
 " Or by my injur'd love, a name more sacred

"Than all your function knows, your gods and you,
 "Your temples, altars, and your holy shrines,
 "Your holy trumpery, shall blaze together."

[*They unbind Ethelinda.*

Rod. 'Tis vain to rave and curse my fortune now.
 Thou native greatness of my soul befriended me,
 And help me now to bear it as I ought.

King. The feeble lamp of life shall lend its blaze
 To light me—thus far—only—and no farther.

[*Falling at Ethelinda's feet.*

Yet I look up and gaze on those bright eyes,
 As if I hop'd to gather heat from thence
 Such as might feed the vital flame for ever.

Ethel. Alas! you faint, your hasty breath comes short,
 And the red stream runs gushing from your breast.
 Call back your thoughts from each deluding passion,
 "And wing your parting soul for her last flight;
 "Call back your thoughts to all your former days,"
 To ev'ry unrepented act of evil,
 And sadly deprecate the wrath divine.

King. Oh, my fair teacher! you advise in vain;
 "The gods and I have done with one another:
 "This night I meant to rival them in happiness;
 "Spite of my brother and thy cruel coldness
 "This night I meant to 'ave past within thy arms.

Ethel. "Oh, horror!

King. "But 'tis gone:" those envious gods
 Have done their worst, and blasted all my hopes;
 They have despoil'd me of my crown and life
 By a slave's hand—but I forgive 'em that.
 Thee—they have robb'd me of my joys in thee—
 Have trod me down to wither in the grave—

Seof. My master and my king!

King. Old man, no more:

I have not leisure for thy grief—Farewell—
 Thou, Aribert—shalt live and wear my crown—
 Take it, and be more blest with it than I was.
 But Ethelinda! she too shall be thine:

That—that's too much. This world has nothing in it
 So good to give—the next may have—I know not—

[*The King dies.*

Arib. "There fled the fierce, untam'd, disdainful, soul,"
 Turn thee from death, and rise, my gentle love;

A day of comfort seems to dawn upon us,
And Heav'n at length is gracious to our wishes.

Ethel. So numberless have been my daily fears,
And such the terrours of my sleepless nights,
That still, methinks, I doubt th' uncertain happiness,
Tho' at the musick of thy voice I own
My soul is hush'd, it sinks into a calm,
And takes sure omen of its peace from thee.

Ofw. To end your doubts your brother, the brave Lucius,
[To *Ethel.*

Will soon be here—ev'n now he sends me word
Fierce Offa and the Saxons fly before him;
'The conqu'ring Britons fence you round from danger,
And peace and safety wait upon your loves.

Arib. Nor you, fair princess! frown upon our happiness;
Still shall my grateful heart retain your goodness,
And still be mindful of the life you gave.
Nor must you think yourself a pris'ner here:
Whene'er you shall appoint a guard attends
To wait you to your brother's camp with honour.

Rod. Yes, I will go, fly far as earth can bear me
From thee, and from the face of man for ever.
Curs'd be your sex, the cause of all our sorrows,
Curs'd be your looks, your tongues, and your false arts,
That cheat our eyes and wound our easy hearts;
“Curs'd may you be for all the pains you give,
“And for the scanty pleasures we receive;”
Curs'd be your brutal pow'r, your tyrant sway,
By which you bend and force us to obey!
Oh, Nature! partial goddess, lend thy hand,
Be just for once, and equal the command;
Let woman once be mistress in her turn,
Subdue mankind beneath her haughty scorn,
And smile to see the proud oppressor mourn.

[Exit *Rodogune.*

Ofw. The wind shall scatter all those idle curses
Far, far away from you, while ev'ry blessing
Attends to crown you. From your happy nuptials,
From royal Aribert, of Saxon race,
Join'd to the fairest of the British dames,
Methinks I read the people's future happiness,
And Britain takes its pledge of peace from you.

Ethel. Nor are those pious hopes of peace in vain,

Since I have often heard a holy sage,
 A venerable, old, and saintlike hermit,
 "With visions often blest'd, and oft' in thought
 "Rapt to the highest brightest seats above,"
 Thus with divine prophetick knowledge fill'd
 Disclose the wonders of the times to come:
 "Of royal race a British queen shall rise
 "Great, gracious, pious, fortunate, and wise;
 "To distant lands she shall extend her fame,
 "And leave to latter times a mighty name;
 "Tyrants shall fall, and faithless kings shall bleed,
 "And groaning nations by her arms be freed,
 "But chief this happy land her care shall prove,
 "And find from her a more than mother's love;
 "From hostile rage she shall preserve it free,
 "Safe in the compass of her ambient sea:
 "Tho' fam'd her arms in many a cruel fight,
 "Yet most in peaceful arts she shall delight,
 "And her chief glory shall be to unite:
 "Picts, Saxons, Angles, shall no more be known,
 "But Briton be the noble name alone:
 "With joy their ancient hate they shall forego,
 "While Discord hides her baleful head below;
 "Mercy, and Truth, and Right, she shall maintain,
 "And ev'ry Virtue crowd to grace her reign;
 "Auspicious Heav'n on all her days shall smile,
 "And with eternal union bless her British isle."

}

*One gen'ral state this nation shall arise,
 In arms unrivall'd and in councils wise;
 Picts, Saxons, Angles, shall no more be known,
 But Britain be the noble name alone;
 To distant lands she shall extend her fame,
 And leave to latest times a glorious name;
 Her naval pow'rs shall rule the circling sea,
 And all her children shall be brave and free.*

[Exeunt.]

EPILOGUE. SPOKEN BY ETHELINDA.

*THE bus'ness of the day being now gone thro',
 I quit the saint and am like one of you,
 As well to look to, tho' not quit so good;
 I bate in spirit, but keep my flesh and blood.
 The moral of this play being rightly scann'd
 Is, he that leaves his nown dear wife is damn'd.
 I leave to you to make the application;
 The doctrine, tho' a little out of fashion,
 May be of use in this same sinful nation.
 What think you of the matter? Which of you
 Would for his spouse like my true turtle do?
 When wealth and beauty both at once importune
 Who would not leave his wife to make his fortune?
 To some I know it may appear but oddly
 That this place of all others should turn godly;
 But what of that, since some good folks there are
 Would gladly be instructed any where?
 Nor should you scorn the weakness of the teacher;
 The wisest man is not the ablest preacher.
 Ev'n we, poor women, have sometimes the pow'r,
 Read as you are, and rich in learning's store,
 To teach you men what you ne'er knew before.
 To no enthusiastick rage we swell,
 Nor foam nor æt Tom Tumbler out of zeal:
 But tho' we do n't pretend to inspiration,
 Yet like the prophets of a neighbour nation
 Our teaching chiefly lies in agitation.
 Perhaps indeed such are your wand'ring brains
 Our Author might have spar'd his tragick pains;
 By that you've supp'd, and are set in to drinking,
 Some sweeter matters will employ your thinking;
 With nymphs divine, writ on each glass before ye,
 You'll be but little better for our story:
 But since the parting hour, tho' late, will come,
 And all of you, at least as I presume,
 May find some kind instructive sbe at home,
 Then curtain lectures will I hope be read,
 Those morals then which from your thoughts were fled
 Shall be put home to you and taught abed.*

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J. Roberts del.

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SMITH in the Character of ALEXANDER
When Glory like the darling Eagle stood
Perch'd on my Beaver in the Granick Flood.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

A TRAGEDY. BY NATHANIEL LEE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book, by permission of the Managers,

BY MR. HOPKINS PROMPTER.

CHARACTERISTICS.

Tho' all the curtains of the sky were drawn—And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on—When Glory like the dazzling eagle stood—Perch'd on my beaver in the Granick flood—When Fortune's self my standard trembling bore—And the pale Fates stood trembling on the shore—When each immortal on the billows rode—I myself appear'd the leading god—Like Mercury I leap'd the walls, and flew amidst the foe—And like a baited lion dy'd myself—All over in the blood of those bold hunters—Till spent with toil I battled on my knees—Flock'd forth the darts that made my shield a forest—And hurl'd 'em back with madd'ning conquer'd fury—Then shining in my arms I spann'd the field—Mov'd, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war—I am lost: what has my vengeance done!—Oh, ye have undone me! You that could stop a lion—Could not turn me! ye should have drawn your swords—And barr'd my rage with their advancing points—Clytus would so have done to save your lives—Oh! I am all a blot! which seas of tears—And my heart's blood can never wash away—Here is not a flaw, but darts oppose my justice—Yet none had courage to prevent this murder—Oh! when shall I be mad!

ALEXANDER.

With humblest adoration kneel—And let a health to Jove's great son go round. HEPHEST. Ife that death awaits me, yet I'll on—When Fame invites and Alexander leads—Dangers and toils but animate the brave—I have no wounds dread Sir: or if I had—Were they all mortal they should stream unmind'd.

LYSIMACHUS.

All Nature seems alarm'd for Alexander—Her pangs proclaim my triumph—My soul's first wishes are to battle Fate—And strike amazement thro' the host of heaven. CASSANDER.

Their province is to talk, it is mine to act—And shew this tyrant when he dar'd to wrong me—He wrong'd a man whose attribute is vengeance.

POLYPERCION.

Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame—Talk be my bane, yet the old man must talk—Perish the soldier inglorious and despis'd—Who starts—when the King cries On—I'll stand erect—straight as a spear, the pillar of my country—And be by so much nearer to the gods—Obtrusive vanity!—The son of good King Philip—I did not kiss the earth, nor must your hand.

CLYTUS.

The King may doom me to a thousand tortures—Ply me with fire, and rack me like Philotas—Ere I shall stoop to idolize his pride.

THESSALUS.

We will not part with you, nor change for Mars—When wilt you, sacred Sir! that we should give—To your great memory those divine honours—Which such exalted virtue does deserve!

PERDICCAS.

There, even there, I'll haunt thee—Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night—By the gods I'll raise a fire that shall consume you both—Tho' I partake the ruin—Were she to fall by any arm but mine—Well might the murmur—My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have way—Nor he nor Heaven shall shield thee from my justice—Die, forcers die, and all my wrongs die with thee—Oh! think for whose sake it was I madly plung'd—Into a crime abhorrent to my nature:

ROXANA.

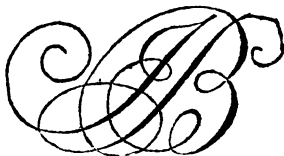
When will my sufferings end! oh when, ye Gods!—For sixty rolling years my soul has flood—The dread vicissitudes of Fate unmov'd—I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore yielded.

SYSGAMBUS.

Stay my Lysimachus! a moment stay!—Oh, whether art thou going! Hold a moment!—Unkind! thou know'st my life was wrapt in thine—Ev'n in that grave will Parisatis join thee—Not death itself shall part us—A mother's power, a sister's soft'ning tears—With all the fury of a tyrant's frown—Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss.

PARISATIS.

Why, Alexander, why wouldst thou deceive me!—Have I not lov'd thee, cruel as thou art!—Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fondness—Bath'd 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my hair!—Whole nights I 'ave sat and watch'd thee as a child—Lull'd thy fierce pains, and sung thee to repose—Perjur'd as he is, he will talk—good gods! how he will talk!—It is heaven to be deluded by him!—If I but mention him the tears will flow—What were the world to Alexander's loss!—Roxana enjoys my perjur'd love!—Oh it is too much—By Heaven I cannot bear it!—Spare Roxana's life!—And oh! sometimes think on your poor queen—And ere the cheerful bowl salutes your lips—Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy. STATIRA.



EDINBURG:

☞ *The Alterations and Additions in this Play, on comparing it with the original, were found so numerous, and so judiciously connected with the words of the Author, that it was judged impracticable to restore the necessary omissions without greatly embarrassing the Reader : the Editor has therefore thought it advisable to deviate from his general plan, and give the Play to the Publick as literally delivered in the representation, with the original Dedication, Prologue, and Epilogue, and a Poem addressed to the Author by Mr. Dryden.*

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN EARL OF MULGRAVE,

*Gentleman of his Majesty's Bedchamber, and Knight of the
most noble Order of the Garter.*

MY LORD,

WHEN I hear by many persons, not indifferent judges, how poets are censured most even where they most intend to please, and sometimes by those too whom they address condemned for flatterers, sycophants, and little fawning wretches, I confess of all undertakings there is none more dreadful to me than a Dedication. So nicely cruel are our judges, that after a play has been generally applauded on the stage the industrious malice of some after-observer shall damn it for an epistle or a preface. For this reason my Lord, Alexander was more to seek for a patron in my troubled thoughts than for the temple of Jupiter Ammon in the spreading wilds and rolling sands. 'Tis certain too he must have been lost had not Fortune, whom I must once at least acknowledge kind in my life, presented me to your Lordship. You were pleased, my Lord, to read it over act by act, and by particular praises, proceeding from the sweetness rather than the justice of your temper, lifted me up from my natural melancholy and diffidence to a bold belief that what so great an understanding warranted could not fail of success.

And here I were most ungrateful if I should not satisfy the judging world of the surprise I was in. Pardon me my Lord for calling it a surprise when I was first honoured by waiting upon your Lordship: so much unexpected, and indeed unusual affability, from persons of your birth and quality, so true an easiness, such frankness without affectation, I never saw. Your constant but few friends shew the firmness of your mind, which never varies; so godlike a virtue, that a prince puts off his majesty when he parts with resolution. In all the happy

times that I attended you, unless 'business or accident interposed, I have observed your company to be the same. You have travelled through all tempers, sailed through all humours of the court's unconstant sea; you have gained the gallant prizes which you sought, your selected unvaluable friends; and I am perfectly persuaded if you traffick but seldom abroad 't is for fear of splitting upon knaves or fools. Nor is it pride, but rather a delicacy of your soul, that makes you shun the sordid part of the world, the lees and dregs of it, while in the noblest retirement you enjoy the finer spirits, and have that just greatness to be above the baser. How commendable therefore is such a reservation! how admirable such a solitude! If you are singular in this we ought to blame the wild, unthinking, dissolute, age; an age whose business is senseless riot, Neronian gambols, and ridiculous debauchery; an age that can produce few persons besides your Lordship who dare be alone: all our hot hours burnt in night revels, drowned by day in dead sleep, or if we wake 't is a point of reeling honour jogs us to the field, where if we live or die we are not concerned; for the soul was laid out before we went abroad, and our bodies were after acted by mere animal spirits without reason.

When I more narrowly contemplate your person, methinks I see in your Lordship two of the most famous characters that ever ancient or modern story could produce, the mighty Scipio and the retired Cowley. You have certainly the gravity, temperance, and judgment, as well as the courage, of the first; all which in your early attempts of war gave the noblest dawn of virtue, and will, when occasion presents, answer our expectation, and shine forth at full: then for the latter, you possess all his sweetness of humour in peace, all that halcyon tranquillity of mind, where your deep thoughts glide like silent waters without a wrinkle; your hours move with softest wings, and rarely any larum strikes to discompose you. You have the philosophy of the first, and (which I confess of all your qualities I love most) the poetry of the latter. I was never more moved at Virgil's Dido than at a short poem of your Lordship's, where nothing but the shortness can be disliked. As our churchmen wish there were more noblemen of their function, so wish I in the behalf of de-

pressed poetry that there were more poets of your Lordship's excellency and eminence. If Poetry be a Virtue she is a ragged one, and never in any age went barer than now. It may be objected she never deserved less. To that I must not answer: but I am sure when she merited most she was always dissatisfied, or she would not have forsaken the most splendid courts in the world. Virgil and Horace, favourites of the mightiest emperour, retired from him, preferring a mistress or a white boy, and two or three cheerful drinking friends in a country village, to all the magnificence of Rome; or if sometimes they were snatched from their cooler pleasures to an imperial banquet, we may see by their verses in praise of a country life 'twas against their inclination, witness Horace in his epode *Beatus ille qui procul*, &c. part of his sixth satire, his epistle to Fusc. Arist. Virgil's Georgick *O Fortunatos nimium bona fi*, &c. all rendered by Mr. Cowley so copiously and naturally as no age gone before or coming after shall equal, tho' all heads join together to outdo him: I speak not of his exactness to a line, but of the whole. This then may be said as to the condition of poets in all times, few ever arrived to a middle fortune, most have lived at the lowest, none ever mounted to the highest; neither by birth, for none was ever born a prince, as no prince to my remembrance was ever born a poet; nor by industry, because they were always too much transported by their own thoughts from minding the grave business of a world, nor of their humour: whereas even slaves, the rubbish of the earth, have by most prodigious fortune gained a sceptre, and with their vile heads sullied the glories of a crown. Praise is the greatest encouragement we chameleons can pretend to, or rather the manna that keeps soul and body together; we devour it as if it were angels' food, and vainly think we grow immortal. For my own part, I acknowledge I never received a better satisfaction from the applause of an audience than I have from your single judgment. You gaze at beauties and wink at blemishes, and do both so gracefully, that the first discovers the acuteness of your judgment, the other the excellency of your nature. And I can affirm to your Lordship there is nothing transports a poet, next to love, like commending in the right place; therefore my Lord, this Play must be your's; and

Alexander, whom I have raised from the dead, comes to you with the assurance answerable to his character and your virtue. You cannot expect him in his majesty of two thousand years ago; I have only put his ashes in an urn, which are now offered with all observance to your Lordship, by

My Lord,

your Lordship's

most humble,

obliged, and

devoted servant,

NAT. LEE.

TO MR. LEE ON HIS ALEXANDER.

THE blast of common censure could I fear
 Before your Play my name should not appear,
 For 't will be thought, and with some colour too,
 I pay the bribe I first receiv'd from you,
 That mutual vouchers for our fame we stand,
 To play the game into each other's hand,
 And as cheap penn'worths to ourselves afford
 As Bessus and the brothers of the sword.
 Such libels private men may well endure
 When states and kings themselves are not secure;
 For ill men, conscious of their inward guilt,
 Think the best actions on by-ends are built:
 And yet my silence had not 'scap'd their spite,
 Then envy had not suffer'd me to write;
 For since I could not ignorance pretend
 Such merit I must envy or commend.
 So many candidates there stand for wit
 A place in court is scarce so hard to get;
 In vain they crowd each other at the door,
 For ev'n reversions are all begg'd before;
 Desert, how known soe'er, is long delay'd,
 And then too fools and knaves are better pay'd:
 Yet as some actions bear so great a name
 That courts themselves are just for fear of shame,
 So has the mighty merit of your Play
 Extorted praise and forc'd itself a way.
 'Tis here as 't is at sea, who farthest goes,
 Or dares the most, makes all the rest his foes.
 Yet when some virtue much outgrows the rest
 It shoots too fast and high to be express'd,
 As his heroick worth struck envy dumb
 Who took the Dutchman and who cut the boom.
 Such praise is your's, while you the passions move,
 That 't is no longer feign'd; 't is real love,
 Where nature triumphs over wretched art;
 We only warm the head, but you the heart:

Always you warm ; and if the rising year,
 As in hot regions, bring the sun too near,
 'Tis but to make your fragrant spices blow,
 Which in our cooler climates will not grow ;
 They only think you animate your theme
 With too much fire who are themselves all phlegm :
 Prizes would be for lags of slowest pace
 Were cripples made the judges of the race.
 Despise those drones who praise while they accuse
 The too much vigour of your youthful muse :
 That humble style which they their virtue make
 Is in your pow'r ; you need but stoop and take.
 Your beauteous images must be allow'd
 By all but some vile poets of the crowd :
 But how should any signpost dauber know
 The worth of Titian or of Angelo ?
 Hard features ev'ry bungler can command,
 To draw true beauty shews a master's hand.

JOHN DRYDEN.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY SIR CAR SCROOP, BART.

*How hard the fate is of the scribbling drudge
Who writes to all when yet so few can judge!
Wit, like religion, once divine was thought,
And the dull crowd believ'd as they were taught;
Now each fanatick fool presumes t' explain
The text, and does the sacred writ profane;
For while your wits each other's fall pursue
The fops usurp the pow'r belongs to you.
You think y' are challeng'd in each new play-bill,
And here you come for trial of your skill,
Where fencer-like you one another hurt,
While with your wounds you make the rabble sport.
Others there are that have the brutal will
To murder a poor play but want the skill;
They love to fight, but seldom have the wit
To spy the place where they may thrust and hit,
And therefore, like some bully of the Town,
Ne'er stand to draw, but knock the poet down.
With these like hogs in gardens it succeeds,
They root up all, and know not flow'rs from weeds.
As for you, Sparks, that hither come each day
To act your own and not to mind our play,
Rehearse your usual follies to the pit,
And with loud nonsense drown the stage's wit,
Talk of your clothes, your last debauches tell,
And witty bargains to each other sell,
Glout on the silly she who for your sake
Can vanity and noise for love mistake,
Till the coquette sung in the next lampoon
Is by her jealous friends sent out of Town,
For in this duelling intriguing age
The love you make is like the war you wage,
Y' are still prevented e'er you come t' engage:
But 't is not to such trifling foes as you
The mighty Alexander deigns to sue;
Ye Persians of the pit he does despise,
But to the men of sense for aid he flies;*

}

*On their experienc'd arms be now depends,
 Nor fears he odds if they but prove his friends ;
 For as he once a little handful chose
 The numerous armies of the world ' oppose,
 So back'd by you who understand the rules
 He hopes to rout the mighty host of fools.*

Dramatis Personae.

MEN.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
ALEXANDER THE GREAT,	Mr. Smith.	Mr. Clinch.
HEPHESTION, Alexander's favourite,	Mr. Davies.	Mr. Wroughton.
LYSIMACHUS, prince of the blood.	Mr. Brereton.	Mr. Hull.
CASSANDER,	{ <i>Conspirators.</i>	Mr. Fearon.
POLYPERCHON,		
PHILIP,		
CLYTUS, master of the horse,	Mr. Jefferson.	Mr. Clarke.
THESSALUS, the Median,	Mr. Farren.	Mr. Thompson.
PERDICCAS, a commander,	Mr. Usher.	Mr. Whitfield.
EUMENES,	Mr. Norris.	Mr. Fox.
ARISTANDER, a sooth- sayer,	Mr. Wrighten.	Mr. L'Estrange.
SLAVE,	Mr. Griffith.	

WOMEN.

ROXANA, first wife of Ale- xander,	Miss Younge.	Mrs. Hunter.
SYSIGAMBIS, mother of the royal family,	Mrs. Johnson.	Mrs. Booth.
PARISATIS, in love with Lyfimachus,	Miss Hopkins.	Miss. Dayes.
STATIRA, married to Ale- xander,	Mrs. Yates.	Mrs. Hartley.

SCENE BABYLON.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

ACT I.

SCENE, the gardens of Semiramis.

HEPHESTION and LYSIMACHUS fighting, CLYTUS parting them.

CLYTUS.

WHAT! are ye madmen? This a time for quarrel?
Put up I say—or by the gods that form'd me
He who refuses makes a foe of Clytus.

Lys. I have his sword.

Clyt. But must not have his life.

Lys. Must not, old Clytus!

Clyt. Hairbrain'd boy you must not.

Heph. Lend me thy sword, thou father of the war,
Thou far-fam'd guard of Alexander's life.

Curse on this weak unexecuting arm!

Lend it, old Clytus, to redeem my fame;

Lysimachus is brave, and else will scorn me.

Lys. There, take thy sword; and since thou'rt bent on
Know 't is thy glory that thou dy'st by me. [death,

Clyt. Stay thee Lysimachus; Hephestion hold;

I bar you both. My body interpos'd,

Now let me see which of you dares to strike.

By Jove you 'ave stirr'd the old man!—that rash arm

That first advances moves against the gods

And our great king, whose deputy I stand.

Lys. Some prop'rer time must terminate our quarrel.

Heph. And cure the bleeding wounds my honour bears.

Clyt. Some prop'rer time! 't is false—no hour is proper;
No time should see a brave man do amiss.

Say what's the noble cause of all this madness,

What vast ambition blows the dang'rous fire?

Why, a vain, smiling, whining, coz'ning, woman!

By all my triumphs in the heat of youth,
 When towns were sack'd and beauties prostrate lay,
 When my blood boil'd, and nature work'd me high,
 Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame;
 I knew 'em, and despis'd their cobweb arts.
 The whole sex is not worth a soldier's thought.

Lys. Our cause of quarrel may to thee seem light,
 But know a less has set the world in arms.

Clyt. Yes, Troy they tell us by a woman fell;
 Curse on the sex, they are the bane of virtue!
 Death! I'd rather this right arm were lost
 Than that the king should hear of your imprudence—
 What, on a day thus set apart for triumph!

Lys. We were indeed to blame.

Clyt. This memorable day,
 When our hot master, whose impatient soul
 Outrides the sun, and sighs for other worlds
 To spread his conquests and diffuse his glory,
 Now bids the trumpet for a while be silent,
 And plays with monarchs whom he us'd to drive,
 Shall we by broils awake him into rage,
 And rouse the lion that has ceas'd to roar?

Lys. Clytus, thou'rt right—put up thy sword Heph-
 Had passion not eclips'd the light of reason [tion:
 Untold we might this consequence have seen.

Heph. Why has not reason pow'r to conquer love?
 Why are we thus enslav'd?

Clyt. Because unmann'd,
 Because ye follow Alexander's steps.
 Heav'ns! that a face should thus bewitch his soul
 And ruin all that's great and godlike in it!
 Talk be my bane, yet the old man must talk.
 Not so he lov'd when he at Issus fought
 And join'd in mighty combat with Darius,
 Whom from his chariot, flaming all with gems,
 He hurl'd to earth and catch'd th' imperial crown.
 'Twas not the shaft of Love perform'd that feat;
 He knew no Cupids then. Now mark the change;
 A brace of Rival Queens embroil the court,
 And while each hand is thus employ'd in beauty
 Where has he room for glory?

Heph. In his heart.

Clyt. Well said young Minion!—I indeed forgot
To whom I spoke—But Syfigambis comes:
Now is your time, for with her comes an idol
That claims homage.—I'll attend the king. [*Exit.*]

Enter SYSIGAMBIS with a letter, and PARISATIS.

Syf. Why will ye wound me with your fond complaints,
And urge a suit that I can never grant?
You know my, child, 't is Alexander's will;
Here he demands you for his lov'd Hephestion;
To disobey him might inflame his wrath,
And plunge our house in ruins yet unknown.

Par. To sooth this god and charm him into temper
Is there no victim, none but Parisatis?

Must I be doom'd to wretchedness and woe
That others may enjoy the conq'ror's smiles?
Oh! if you ever lov'd my royal father——
And sure you did, your gushing tears proclaim it——
If still his name be dear, have pity on me!
He would not thus have forc'd me to despair;
Indeed he would not—Had I begg'd him thus
He would have heard me ere my heart was broke.

Syf. When will my sufferings end? oh when, ye Gods!
For sixty rolling years my soul has stood
The dread vicissitudes of fate unmov'd;
I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore yielded:
But this last trial, as it springs from folly,
Exceeds my sufferance, and I must complain.

Lys. When Syfigambis mourns no common woe
Can be the cause—'t is misery indeed.
Yet pardon, mighty queen! a wretched prince
Who thus presumes to plead the cause of love.
Beyond my life, beyond the world, [*Kneeling.*] I prize
Fair Parisatis.—Hear me I conjure you!
As you have authoriz'd Hephestion's vows
Reject not mine—grant me but equal leave
To serve the princess, and let love decide.

Heph. A blessing like the beauteous Parisatis
Whole years of service, and the world's wide empire,
With all the blood that circles in our veins,
Can never merit, therefore in my favour
I begg'd the king to interpose his int'rest,

Therefore I begg'd your majesty's assistance;
Your word is past, and all my hopes rest on't.

Lys. rising.] Perish such hopes! for love's a gen'rous
Which seeks the happiness of her we love [passion,
Beyond th' enjoyment of our own desires;
Nor kings nor parents here have ought to do:
Love owns no influence, and disdains control;
Let 'em stand neuter—'t is all I ask.

Heph. Such arrogance did Alexander woo
Would lose him all the conquests he has won.

Lys. To talk of conquests well becomes the man
Whose life and sword are but his rival's gift!

Sys. It grieves me, brave Lydimachus, to find
My pow'r fall short of my desires to serve you:
You know Hephestion first declar'd his love,
And 'tis as true I promis'd him my aid;
Your glorious king, his mighty advocate,
Became himself an humble suppliant for him.
Forget her prince, and triumph o'er your passion,
A conquest worthy of a soul like thine.

Lys. Forget her Madam! sooner shall the sun
Forget to shine and tumble from his sphere.
Alas! the stream that circles thro' my heart
Is less than love essential to my being!
Farewell great queen—my honour now demands
That Alexander should himself explain
That wondrous merit which exalts his fav'rite,
And casts Lydimachus at such a distance. [Exit.

Sys. In this wild transport of ungovern'd passion
Too far I fear he will incense the king.
Is Alexander yet, my Lord; arriv'd?

Heph. Madam, I know not; but Cassander comes;
He may perhaps inform us.

Sys. I would shew him:
Something there is, I know not why, that shocks me,
Something my nature shrinks at when I see him. [Exeunt.

Enter CASSANDER.

Cas. The face of Day now blushes scarlet deep,
Now blackens into night; the low'ring Sun,
As if the dreadful business he foreknew,
Drives heavily his sable chariot on. [Thunder.

How fierce it lightens! how it thunders round me!
 All Nature seems alarm'd for Alexander.
 Why, be it so: her pangs proclaim my triumph.
 My soul's first wishes are to startle Fate
 And strike amazement thro' the host of heav'n.
 A mad Chaldean with a flaming torch
 Came to my bed last night, and bellowing o'er me,
 "Well had it been," he cry'd, "for Babylon
 "If curst Cassander never had been born."

Enter THESSALUS with a packet.

How now? dear Thessalus! what packet's that?
Thes. From Macedon; a trusty slave just brought it.
 Your father chides us for our cold delay;
 He says Craterus, by the king's appointment,
 Comes in his room to govern Macedon,
 Which nothing but the tyrant's death can hinder;
 Therefore he bids us boldly strike,
 Or quit our purpose and confess our fears.

Cas. Is not his fate resolv'd? this night he dies,
 And thus my father but forestals my purpose.
 How am I slow then? If I rode on thunder,
 Wing'd as the lightning, it would ask some moments
 Ere I could blast the growth of this Colossus.

Thes. Mark where the haughty Polyperchon comes!
 Some new affront by Alexander giv'n
 Swells in his heart, and stings him into madness.

Cas. Now, now's our time; he must, he shall, be ours:
 His haughty soul will kindle at his wrongs,
 Blaze into rage, and glory in revenge.

Enter POLYPERCHON.

Poly. Still as I pass fresh murmurs fill my ears;
 All talk of wrongs, and mutter their complaints.
 Poor soulless reptiles!—their revenge expires
 In idle threats—the fortitude of cowards!
 Their province is to talk, 't is mine to act,
 And shew this tyrant when he dar'd to wrong me
 He wrong'd a man whose attribute is vengeance.

Cas. All nations bow their heads with servile homage,
 And kiss the feet of this exalted man.
 The name, the shout, the blast, from ev'ry mouth
 Is Alexander! Alexander stuns
 The list'ning ear and drowns the voice of Heav'n!

The earth's commanders fawn like crouching spaniels;
 And if this hunter of the barb'rous world
 But wind himself a god all echo him
 With univerfal cry.

Poly. I fawn or echo him!

Cassander no; my soul disdains the thought!
 Let eastern slaves or prostituted Greeks
 Crouch at his feet, or tremble if he frown;
 When Polyperchon can descend so low,
 False to that honour which thro' fields of death
 I still have courted where the fight was fiercest,
 Be scorn my portion, infamy my lot.

Thef. The king may doom me to a thousand tortures,
 Ply me with fire, and rack me like Philotas,
 Ere I shall stoop to idolize his pride.

Caf. Not Aristadner, had he rais'd all hell,
 Cou'd more have shock'd my soul than thou hast done
 By the bare mention of Philotas' murder.
 Oh Polyperchon! how shall I describe it!
 Did not your eyes rain blood to see the hero?
 Did not your spirits burst with smother'd vengeance
 To see thy noble fellow-warriour tortur'd,
 Yet without groaning or a tear endure
 The torments of the damn'd? Oh! death to think it!
 We saw him bruise'd, we saw his bones laid bare,
 His veins wide lac'd, and the poor quiv'ring flesh
 With fiery pincers from his bosom torn,
 Till all beheld where the great heart lay panting.

Poly. Yet all like statues stood!—cold lifeless statues!
 As if the sight had froze us into marble,
 When with collected rage we should have flown
 To instant vengeance on the ruthless cause,
 And plung'd a thousand daggers in his heart.

Caf. At our last banquet, when the bowl had gone
 The giddy round, and wine inflam'd my spirits,
 I saw Craterus and Hephestion enter
 In Persian robes; to Alexander's health
 They largely drank, and falling at his feet
 With impious adoration thus address'd
 Their idol god; Hail, son of thund'ring Jove!
 Hail, first of kings! young Ammon, live for ever!
 Then kiss'd the ground, on which I laugh'd aloud.

And scoffing ask'd 'em why they kiss'd no harder?
Whereon the tyrant, starting from his throne,
Spurn'd me to earth, and stamping on my neck,
Learn thou to kiss it, was his fierce reply,
While with his foot he press'd me to the earth
Till I lay welt'ring in a foam of blood.

Poly. Thus when I mock'd the Persians that ador'd him
He struck me on the face,
And bid his guards chastise me like a slave:
But if he 'scape my vengeance may he live
Great as that god whose name he thus profanes,
And like a slave may I again be beaten,
Scoff'd as I pass, and branded for a coward.

Cas. There spoke the spirit of Calisthenes.
Remember he's a man, his flesh as penetrable
As any girl's, and wounded too as soon;
To give him death no thunders are required:
Struck by a stone young Jupiter has fall'n,
A sword has pierc'd him and the blood has follow'd,
Water will drown him, or the fire will burn;
Nay, we have seen an hundred common ailments
Bring this immortal to the gates of death.

Poly. Oh let us not delay the glorious bus'ness!
Our wrongs are great, and honour calls for vengeance.
Are your hearts firm?

Thes. As Heav'n or Hell can make 'em.

Poly. Take then my hand, and if you doubt my truth
Rip up my breast and lay my heart upon it.

Cas. While thus we join our hands and hearts together
Remember Hermolaeus, and be hush'd.

Poly. Hush'd as the eve before an hurricane,
Or baleful planets when they shed their poisons.

Cas. This day exulting Babylon receives
The mighty robber—with him comes Roxana,
Fierce haughty fair! on his return from India
Artful she met him in the height of triumph,
And by a thousand wiles at Susa kept him
In all the luxury of eastern revels.

Poly. How bore Statira his revolted love?
For if I err not ere the king espous'd her
She made him promise to renounce Roxana.

Thes. No words can paint the anguish it occasion'd;

Ev'n Syfigambis wept, while the wrong'd queen,
Struck to the heart, fell lifeless on the ground,
And thus remain'd, spite of her care and cordials,
For an hour.

Cas. When the first tumult of her grief was laid
I fought to fire her into wild revenge,
And to that end with all the art I could
Describ'd his passion for the bright Roxana;
But tho' I could not to my wish inflame her,
Thus far at least her jealousy will help;
She'll give him troubles that perhaps may end him,
And set the court in universal uproar.
But see, she comes. Our plots begin to ripen;
Now change the vizer, ev'ry one disperse,
And with a face of friendship meet the king. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter SYSIGAMBIS, STATIRA, and PARISATIS.

Stat. Oh for a dagger, a draught of poison, flames!
Swell heart! break, break, thou wretched stubborn thing!
Now by the sacred fire I'll not be held!
Why do you wish my life, yet stifle me for
Want of air?—Pray give me leave to walk.

Syf. Is there no rev'rence to my person due?
Trust me, Statira, had thy father liv'd
Darius wou'd have heard me.

Stat. Oh he's false!
This glorious man, this wonder of the world,
Is to his love and ev'ry god foresworn!
Oh! I have heard him breathe such ardent vows,
Outweep the morning with his dewy eyes,
And sigh and swear the list'ning stars away!

Syf. Believe not rumour; 't is impossible:
Thy Alexander is renown'd for truth,
Above deceit——

Stat. Away, and let me die:
'Twas but my fondness, 't was my easy nature,
Wou'd have excus'd him.——
Are not his falsehoods and Statira's wrongs
A subject canvass'd in the mouths of millions?
The babbling world can talk of nothing else.
Why, Alexander, why wouldst thou deceive me!
Have I not lov'd thee, cruel as thou art!

Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fondness,
 Bath'd 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my hair!
 Whole nights I've sat and watch'd thee as a child,
 Lull'd thy fierce pains, and sung thee to repose!

Par. If man can thus renounce the solemn ties
 Of sacred love who wou'd regard his vows?

Stat. Regard his vows! the monster, traitor! Oh!
 I will forsake the haunts of men, converse
 No more with aught that's human, dwell with darkness;
 For since the sight of him is now unwelcome,
 What has the world to give Statira joy?
 Yet I must tell thee, perjur'd as he is,
 Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,
 The fragrant violet or op'ning rose,
 Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath.
 Then he will talk—good Gods! how he will talk!
 He speaks the kindest words, and looks such things,
 Vows with such passion, and swears with such a grace,
 That it is heav'n to be deluded by him!

Syf. Her sorrows must have way.

Stat. Roxana then enjoys my perjur'd love,
 Roxana clasps my monarch in her arms,
 Dotes on my conqueror, my dear lord, my king!
 Oh, 'tis too much! by Heav'n I cannot bear it!
 She clasps him all—she, the curst happy she—
 I'll die, or rid me of the burning torture!
 Hear me bright god of Day! hear ev'ry god.

Syf. Take heed Statira, weigh it well my child,
 Ere desp'rate love enforces you to swear.

Stat. Oh! fear not that, already have I weigh'd it,
 And in the presence here of Heav'n and you
 Renounce all converse with perfidious man.
 Farewell ye coz'ners of our easy sex!
 And thou, the falsest of the faithless kind,
 Farewell for ever! Oh, farewell! farewell!
 If I but mention him the tears will flow!
 How couldst thou, cruel! wrong a heart like mine,
 Thus fond, thus doting, ev'n to madness, on thee!

Syf. Clear up thy griefs, thy Alexander comes,
 Triumphant in the spoils of conquer'd India;
 This day the hero enters Babylon.

Stat. Why, let him come; all eyes will gaze with rapture,
All hearts will joy to see the victor pass,
All but the wretched the forlorn Statira.

Syf. Wilt thou not see him then?

Stat. I swear, and Heav'n be witness to my vow! [*Kneels.*
Never from this sad hour, never to see
Nor speak, no, nor, if possible, to think
Of Alexander more. This is my vow,
And when I break it—

Syf. Do not ruin all.

Stat. May I again be perjur'd and deluded!
May Furies rend my heart! may lightnings blast me!

Syf. Recall, my child, the dreadful imprecation.

Stat. No, I will publish it thro' all the court,
Then to the bow'rs of great Semiramis
Retire for ever from the treach'rous world,
There from man's sight will I conceal my woes,
And seek in solitude a calm repose.
Nor pray'rs nor tears shall my resolves control,
Nor love itself, that tyrant of the soul. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE, *a triumphal arch.*

CASSANDER and POLYPERCHON.

CASSANDER.

HE comes, the headlong Alexander comes;
The gods forbid him Babylon in vain;
In vain do prodigies foretel his fall:
Attended by a throng of scepter'd slaves
'This rapid conq'ror of the ravag'd globe
Makes his appearance, and defies the danger.

Poly. Why all this noise—ye partial Pow'rs declare—
These starts of nature, at a tyrant's doom?
Is Alexander of such wondrous moment
That Heav'n should feel the wild alarms of fear,
And Fate itself become a babbler for him?

Cas. Cas'd in the very arms we saw him wear
The spirit of his father haunts the court
In all the majesty of solemn sorrow:

The awful spectre fix'd his eyes upon me,
Wav'd his pale hand—and threatful shook his head,
Groan'd out Forbear—and vanish'd from my view.

A fear till then unknown possess'd my soul,
And sick'ning Nature trembled at the sight!

Poly. Why should you tremble?—Had the yawning earth
Laid all the tortures of the damn'd before me
My soul, unshaken in her firm resolve,
Wou'd brave those tortures and pursue the tyrant.

Cas. Yes, Polyperchon, he this night shall die;
Our plots in spite of prodigies advance;
Success attends us.—Oh, it joys my soul
To deal destruction like the hand of Heav'n,
Felt while unseen!

Poly. The Persians all dissatisfy'd appear,
Loudly they murmur at Statira's wrongs,
And fiercely censure Alexander's falsehood.

Cas. I know he loves Statira more than life,
And when he hears the solemn vow she made,
The oath that bars her from his sight for ever,
Remorse and horror will at once invade him,
Rend his wreck'd soul, and rush him into madness.

Poly. Of that anon—the court begins to thicken;
From ev'ry province of the wide-spread earth
Ambassadors in Babylon are met,
As if mankind had previously agreed
To compliment the tyrant's boundless pride,
And hold a solemn synod of the world
Where Alexander like a god should dictate.

Cas. We must away or mingle with the crowd,
Adore this god till apt occasion calls
To make him what he wou'd be thought—immortal.

[*Exeunt.*]

A symphony of warlike musick.

Enter CLYTUS, and ARISTANDER in his robes.

Arist. Haste, rev'rend Clytus, haste and stop the king.

Clyt. Already is he enter'd, and the throng
Of princes that surround him is so great
They keep at distance all that would approach.

Arist. Were he encircled by the gods themselves
I must be heard, for death awaits his stay.

Clyt. Then place yourself within his trumpet's sound;
Shortly he'll appear.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter ALEXANDER in a triumphal car drawn by black slaves, trophies and warlike ensigns in procession before him CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, LYSIMACHUS, ARISTANDER Captives, Guards, and Attendants.

I.

See the conqu'ring hero comes,
Sound the trumpet beat the drums;
Sports prepare, the laurel bring,
Sports of triumph to him sing.

II.

See the godlike youth advance,
Breathe the flute and lead the dance;
Myrtle wreath and roses twine
To deck the hero's brow divine.

Heph. Hail, son of Jove! great Alexander! hail.

Alex. Rise all; and thou my second self, my friend,
Oh, my Hephestion! raise thee from the earth!
Come to my arms, and hide thee in my heart;
Nearer, yet nearer, else thou lov'st me not.

Heph. Not love my king! bear witness all ye Pow'rs,
And let your thunder nail me to the centre
If sacred friendship ever burn'd more brightly!
Immortal bosoms can alone admit.

A flame more pure, more permanent, than mine.

Alex. Thou dearer to me than my groves of laurel,
I know thou lov'st thy Alexander more
Than Clytus does the king.

Lyf. Now for my fate!

I see that death awaits me—yet I'll on.

Dread Sir! I cast me at your royal feet.

Alex. Rise, my Lyfimachus; thy veins and mine
From the same fountain have deriv'd their streams:
Rise to my arms, and let thy king embrace thee.
Is not that Clytus?

Clyt. Your old faithful soldier.

Alex. Clytus, thy hand—thy hand Lyfimachus;
Thus double arm'd methinks
I stand tremendous as the Lybian god,
Who while his priests and I quaff'd sacred blood
Acknowledg'd me his son: my lightning thou,
And thou my mighty thunder. I have seen
Thy glitt'ring sword outfly celestial fire;

And when I've cry'd Begone and execute,
I've seen him run swifter than starting hinds,
Nor bent the tender grass beneath his feet.

Lys. When fame invites, and Alexander leads,
Dangers and toils but animate the brave.

Clyt. Perish the soldier inglorious and despis'd
Who starts from either when the King cries—On.

Alex. Oh Clytus! Oh my noble veteran!
'Twas, I remember, when I pass'd the Granicus
His arm preserv'd me from unequal force:
When fierce Itanor and the bold Rhesaces
Fell both upon me with two mighty blows,
And clove my temper'd helmet quite asunder,
Then like a god flew Clytus to my aid,
Thy thunder struck Rhesaces to the ground,
And turn'd with ready vengeance on Itanor.

Clyt. To your own deeds that victory you owe,
And sure your arms did never boast a nobler.

Alex. By Heav'n they never did; they never can;
And I more glory to have pass'd that stream
Than to have drove a million o'er the plain.
Can none remember, yes, I know all must,
When Glory like the dazzling eagle stood
Perch'd on my beaver in the Granick flood,
When Fortune's self my standard trembling bore,
And the pale Fates stood frighted on the shore,
When each immortal on the billows rode,
And I myself appear'd the leading god?

Arist. Haste, first of heroes, from this fatal place;
Far, far from Babylon enjoy your triumph,
Or all the glories which your youth has won
Are blasted in their spring.

Alex. What mean thy fears?
And why that wild distraction on thy brow?

Arist. This morn, great King! I view'd the angry sky,
And frighted at the direful prodigies
To Orosimades for instruction flew;
But as I pray'd deep echoing groans I heard,
And shrieks as of the damn'd that howl for sin.
Shock'd at the omen, while amaz'd I lay
In prostrate rev'rence on the trembling floor,

Thus spoke the god:

The brightest glory of imperial man,
The pride of nations, and the boast of fame,
Remorseless Fate in Babylon has doom'd
To sudden and irrevocable ruin.

Alex. If Heav'n ordains that Babylon must fall
Can I prevent th' immutable decree?

Enter PERDICCAS.

Per. O horror! horror! dreadful and portentous!

Alex. How now Perdiccas! whence this exclamation?

Per. As Meleager and myself this morn
Led forth the Persian horse to exercise
We heard a noise as of a rushing wind,
When suddenly a flight of baleful birds,
Like a thick cloud, obscur'd the face of heav'n;
On sounding wings from diff'rent parts they flew,
Encount'ring met, and battled in the air,
Their talons clash'd, their beaks gave mighty blows,
And show'rs of blood fell copious from their wounds.

Alex. Tho' all the curtains of the sky were drawn,
And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on.
While my Statira shines I cannot stray,
Love lifts his torch to light me on my way,
And her bright eyes create another day.

Lyf. Vouchsafe, dread Sir! to hear my humble suit;
A prince entreats it.

Alex. A soldier asks it; that's the noblest claim.

Lyf. For all the services my word has done
Humbly I beg the princess Parifatis.

Alex. Lyfimachus, no more—it is not well—
My word, you know, was to Hephestion giv'n:
How dare you then—

Lyf. At your command to scale th' embattled wall,
Or fetch the gore-dy'd standard from the foe,
When has Hephestion flown with warmer zeal?
When did he leave Lyfimachus behind?
These I have done, for these were in my pow'r;
But when you charge me to renounce my love,
And from my thoughts to banish Parifatis,
Obedience there becomes impossible,
Nature revolts, and my whole soul rebels.

Alex. It does, brave Sir!—Now hear me, and be dumb.

When by my order curst Calisthenes
 Was as a traitor doom'd to live in torments,
 Your pity sped him in despite of me.
 Think not I have forgot your insolence,
 No, tho' I pardon'd it—Yet if again
 Thou dar'st to cross me with another crime
 The bolts of fury shall be doubled on thee.
 In the mean-time—think not of Parisatis,
 For if thou dost—by the immortal Ammon
 I'll not regard that blood of mine thou shar'st,
 But use thee as the vilest Macedonian.

Lyf. I knew you partial ere I mov'd my suit,
 Yet know it shakes not my determin'd purpose;
 While I have life and strength to wield a sword
 I never will forego the glorious claim.

Alex. Against my life! ha! traitor, was it so?
 'Tis said that I am rash, of hasty humour;
 But I appeal to the immortal gods.
 If ever petty, poor, provincial, lord
 Had tempter like to mine? My slave, whom I
 Could tread to clay, dares utter bloody threats.

Clyt. Forgive, dread Sir! the frantick warmth of love;
 The noble prince, I read it in his eyes,
 Wou'd die a thousand deaths to serve his king,
 And justify his loyalty and truth.

Lyf. I meant his minion there should feel my arm:
 Love claims his blood, nor shall he live to triumph
 In that destruction that awaits his rival.

Alex. I pardon thee for my old Clytus' sake;
 But if once more thou mention thy rash love,
 Or dar'st attempt Hephestion's precious life,
 I'll pour such storms of indignation on thee
 Philotas' rack, Calisthenes' disgrace,
 Shall be delight to what thou shalt endure.

Clyt. My Lord, the aged queen, with Parisatis,
 Come to congratulate your safe arrival.

Enter SYSIGAMBIS and PARISATIS.

Alex. Oh thou, the best of women, Sysigambis!
 Source of my joy, blest parent of my love!

Sys. In humble duty to the gods and you
 Permit us, Sir, with gratitude to kneel.
 Thro' you the royal house of Persia shines,

Rais'd from the depth of wretchedness and ruin,
 In all the splendour of imperial greatness.
 'To meet me thus was generously done,
 But still there wants to crown my happiness
 That treasure of my soul, my dear Statira!
 Had she but come to meet her Alexander
 I had been blest indeed.

Clyt. Now who shall dare
 To tell him of the queen's vow?

Alex. How fares
 My love?—Ha! neither answer me! all silent!
 A sudden horror, like a bolt of ice,
 Shoots to my heart, and numbs the seat of life.

Heph. I would relate it, but my courage fails me.

Alex. Why stand you all as you were rooted here?
 What! will none answer? my Hephcstion silent!
 If thou hast any love for Alexander,
 If ever I oblig'd thee by my care,
 When thro' the field of death my eye has watch'd thee,
 Resolve my doubts, and rescue me from madness.

Heph. Your mourning queen has no disease but grief,
 Occasion'd by the jealous pangs of love.
 She heard, tread Sir! (for what can 'scape a lover)
 That you, regardless of your vows, at Susa
 Had to Roxana's charms resign'd your heart,
 And revell'd in the joys you once foreswore.

Alex. I own the subtle forc'refs in my riot,
 My reason gone, seduc'd me to her bed,
 But when I wak'd I shook the Circe off,
 Tho' the enchantress held me by the arm,
 And wept and gaz'd with all the force of love;
 Nor griev'd I less for that which I had done
 Than when at Thais' suit, enrag'd with wine,
 I set the fam'd Persepolis on fire.

Heph. Your queen Statira, in the rage of grief,
 And agony of desp'rate love, has sworn
 Never to see your Majesty again.

Alex. Oh Madam! has she? has Statira sworn
 Never to see her Alexander more?
 Impossible! she cou'd not, you'd not, swear it.
 Is she not gentle as the guileless infant,

Mild as the genial breezes of the spring,
And softer than the melting sighs of love?

Par. With sorrow, Sir, I heard the solemn vow,
My mother heard it, and in vain adjur'd her
By ev'ry tender motive to recall it.

Syf. But with that fixtreeness she resents her wrongs,
Dwells on your fault, and heightens the offence,
That I could wish your Majesty forget her.

Alex. Ha! could you wish me to forget Statira!
The star which brightens Alexander's life,
His guide by day and goddess of his nights!
I feel her now, she beats in ev'ry pulse,
Throbs at my heart, and circles with my blood!

Syf. Have patience son, and trust to Heav'n and me;
If my authority has any influence
I will exert it, and she shall be your's.

Alex. Haste, Madam, haste, if you would have me live;
Fly ere for ever she abjure the world,
And stop the sad procession: [*Exit Syf.*] and Parisatis,
Hang thou about her, wash her feet with tears.
Nay haste: the breath of gods and eloquence
Of angels go along with you. [*Exit Parisatis.*]
Oh my heart!

Lyf. Now let your Majesty who feels the pangs
Of disappointed love reflect on mine.

Alex. Ha!

Clyt. What, are you mad? is this a time to plead!

Lyf. The prop'rest time; he dares not now be partial,
Lest Heav'n in justice should avenge my wrongs,
And double ev'ry pang which he feels now.

Alex. Why dost thou tempt me thus to thy undoing?
Death thou shouldst have were it not courted so:
But know, to thy confusion, that my word,
Like Destiny, admits of no repeal;
Therefore in chains shalt thou behold the nuptials
Of my Hephestion. Guards, take him prisoner.

[*The Guards seize Lyfimachus.*]

Lyf. Away ye Slaves! I'll not resign my sword
Till first I've drench'd it in my rival's blood.

Alex. I charge you kill him not; take him alive:
The dignity of kings is now concern'd,
And I will find a way to tame this rebel.

Clyt. Kneel—for I see rage lightning in his eyes.

Lyf. I neither hope nor will I sue for pardon.

Had I my sword and liberty again,

Again I would attempt his fav'rite's heart.

Alex. Hence from my sight, and bear him to a dungeon.

Perdiccas, give this lion to a lion:

None speak for him: fly; stop his mouth; away.

[*Exeunt Lyf. Perd. and Guard.*]

Clyt. This comes of women—the result of love:

'Tis folly all, 't is frenzy and distraction;

Yet were I heated now with wine I doubt

I should be preaching in this fool's behalf.

Alex. Come hither Clytus, and my friend Hepheestion;

Lend me your arms:

I fear betwixt Statira's cruel vows

And fond Roxana's arts your king will fall.

Clyt. Better the race of women were destroyed,

And Persia sunk in everlasting ruin!

Heph. Look up my Lord, and bend not thus your head,

As if you purpos'd to forsake the world,

Which you have greatly won.

Alex. Wou'd I had not;

There's no true joy in such unwieldy fortune.

Eternal gazers lasting troubles make;

All find my spots, but few observe my brightness.

Stand from about me all, and give me air.

Yes, I will shake this Cupid from my soul,

I'll fright the feeble god with war's alarms,

Or drown his pow'r in floods of hostile blood.

Grant me, great Mars! once more in arms to shine,

And break like lightning thro' th' embattled line,

Thro' fields of death to whirl the rapid car,

And blaze amidst the thunder of the war,

Resiftless as the bolt that rends the grove,

Or greatly perish like the son of Jove.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE, *an open court; trumpets sounding a dead march; LY-SIMACHUS led prisoner; EUMENES, PERDICCAS, PARISATIS, and Guards.*

PARISATIS.

STAY my Lyfimachus! a moment stay!
Oh, whither art thou going!—hold a moment!
Unkind! thou know’st my life was wrapt in thine,
Why wouldst thou then to worse than death expose me?

Lys. Oh, may’st thou live in joys without allay!
Grant it ye Gods! a better fortune waits thee;
Live and enjoy it—’t is my dying wish,
While to the grave the lost Lyfimachus
Alone retires, and bids the world adieu.

Par. Ev’n in that grave will Parisatis join thee;
Yes, cruel man! not death itself shall part us:
A mother’s pow’r, a sister’s soft’ning tears,
With all the fury of a tyrant’s frown,
Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss.

Lys. Were I to live till Nature’s self decay’d
This wondrous waste of unexampled love
I never could repay—Oh Parisatis!
Thy charms might fire a coward into courage,
How must they act then on a soul like mine?
Defenceless and unarm’d I fight for thee,
And may perhaps compel th’ astonish’d world,
And force the king, to own that I deserve thee.
Eumenes, take the princess to thy charge.
Away Perdiccas, all my soul’s on fire.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *the palace.*

Enter ROXANA and CASSANDER.

Rox. Deserted! saidst thou? for a girl abandon’d!
A puny girl, made up of wat’ry elements!
Shall she embrace the god of my desires,
And triumph in the heart Roxana claims?

Cas. Oh princess! had you seen his wild despair,
Had you beheld him when he heard her vow,
Words wou’d but wrong the agonies he felt;
He fainted thrice, and life seem’d fled for ever;
And when by our assiduous care recall’d,

He snatch'd his sword, and aim'd it at his breast,
Then rail'd at you with most unheard of curses.

Rox. If I forget it may'st thou, Jove, deprive me
Of vengeance, make me the most wretched thing
On earth while living, and when dead the lowest
Of the fiends.

Cas. Oh, nobly said!
Just is the vengeance which inflames your soul;
Your wrongs demand it—but let reason govern;
This wild rage else may disappoint your aims.

Rox. Away, away, and give a whirlwind room!
Pride, indignation, fury, and contempt,
War in my breast, and torture me to madness.

Cas. Oh! think not I would check your boldest flights;
No—I approve 'em, and will aid your vengeance:
But, princess, let us chuse the safest course,
Or we may give our foes new cause of triumph,
Should they discover and prevent our purpose.

Rox. Fear not Cassander, nothing shall prevent it;
Roxana dooms him, and her voice is fate.
My soul from childhood has aspir'd to empire;
In early nonage I was us'd to reign
Among my she-companions; I despis'd
The trifling arts and little wiles of women,
And taught 'em with an Amazonian spirit
To win the steed, to chase the foaming boar,
And conquer man, the lawless charter'd savage.

Cas. Her words, her looks, her ev'ry motion, fires me.

Rox. But when I heard of Alexander's fame,
How with a handful he had vanquish'd millions,
Spoil'd all the East, and captive held our queens,
Unconquer'd by their charms,
With heav'nly pity he assuag'd their woes,
Dry'd up their tears, and sooth'd them into peace,
I hung attentive on my father's lips,
And wish'd him tell the wondrous tale again.
No longer pleasing were my former sports,
Love had its turn; and all the woman reign'd:
Involuntary sighs heav'd in my breast,
And glowing blushes crimson'd on my cheek;
Ev'n in my slumbers I have often mourn'd
In plaintive sounds, and murmur'd Alexander.

Cas. Curse on his name—she dotes upon him still.

Rox. At length this conq'ror to Zogdia came,
And cover'd o'er with laurels storm'd the city:
But oh Cassander! where shall I find words
To paint th' ecstasick transports of my soul
When midst a circle of unrivall'd beauties
I saw myself distinguish'd by the hero!
With artless rapture I receiv'd his vows,
The warmest sure that ever lover breath'd
Of fervent love and everlasting truth.

Cas. And need you then be told those times are past?
Statira now engrosses all his thoughts;
The Persian queen without a rival reigns
Sole mistress of his heart—nor can thy charms,
The brightest sure that ever woman boasted,
Nor all his vows of everlasting love,
Secure Roxana from disdain and insult.

Rox. Oh thou hast rous'd the lion in my soul!
Ha! shall the daughter of Darius hold him?
No, 'tis resolv'd; I will resume my sphere,
Or falling spread a gen'ral ruin round me.
Roxana and Statira! they are names
That must for ever jar;
When they encounter thunders must ensue.

Cas. Behold she comes in all the pomp of sorrow,
Determin'd to fulfil her solemn vow! [*They retire.*]

Enter SYSIGAMBIS and STATIRA.

Rox. Away, and let us mark th' important scene.

Sys. Oh my Statira! how has passion chang'd thee!
Think in the rage of disappointed love,
If treated thus and hurry'd to extremes,
What Alexander may denounce against us,
Against the poor remains of lost Darius.

Stat. Oh fear not that! I know he will be kind,
For my sake kind, to you and Parisatis.
Tell him I rail'd not at his falsehood to me,
But with my parting breath spoke kindly of him;
Tell him I wept at our divided loves,
And fighting sent a last forgiveness to him.

Sys. No, I can ne'er again presume to meet him,
Never approach the much-wrong'd Alexander,
If thou refuse to see him.—Oh Statira!
Thy aged mother and thy weeping country

Claim thy regard and challenge thy compassion :
Hear us my child, and lift us from despair.

Stat. Thus low I cast me at your royal feet
To bathe them with my tears ; or if you please
I'll let out life and wash 'em with my blood :
But I conjure you not to rack my soul,
Nor hurry my wild thoughts to perfect madness :
Should now Darius' awful ghost appear,
And you my mother stand beseeching by,
I would persist to death and keep my vow.

Rox. This fortitude of soul compels my wonder.

Syf. Hence from my sight ! ungrateful wretch begone !
Hence to some desert,
And hide thee where bright virtue never shone,
For in the sight of Heav'n I here renounce
And cast thee off, an alien to my blood. [Exit Syf.]

ROXANA comes forward.

Rox. Forgive, great queen ! th' intrusion of a stranger ;
With grief Roxana sees Statira weep :
I've heard and much applaud your fixt resolve
To quit the world for Alexander's sake,
And yet I fear so greatly he adores you
That he will rather chuse to die of sorrow
Than live for the despis'd Roxana's charms.

Stat. Spare, Madam, spare your counterfeited fears ;
You know your beauty and have prov'd its pow'r :
Tho' humbly born, have you not captive held
In love's soft chains the conqueror of the world !
Away to libertines and boast thy conquest,
A shameful conquest ! In his hours of riot
Then, only then, Roxana could surprise
My Alexander's heart.

Rox. To some romantick grove's sequester'd gloom
Thy sickly virtue would it seems retire.
To shun the triumphs of a favour'd rival.
In vain thou fly'st—for there, even there, I'll haunt thee,
Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night :
There shalt thou hear in what ecstatick joys
Roxana revels with the first of men ;
And as thou hear'st the rapt'rous scene recited
With frantick jealousy thou 'lt madly curse
Thy own weak charms that could not fix the rovers.

Stat. How weak is woman! at the storm she shrinks,
Dreads the drawn sword and trembles at the thunder;
Yet when strong jealousy inflames her soul
The sword may glitter and the tempest roar;
She scorns the danger and provokes her fate.
Rival, I thank thee—thou hast fir'd my soul,
And rais'd a storm beyond thy pow'r to lay;
Soon shalt thou tremble at the dire effects,
And curse too late the folly that undid thee.

Rox. Sure the disdain'd Statira dares not mean it.

Stat. By all my hopes of happiness I dare:
And know, proud woman, what a mother's threats,
A sister's sighs, and Alexander's tears,
Could not effect thy rival rage has done.
My soul, that starts at breach of oaths begun,
Shall to thy ruin violated run:
I'll see the King in spite of all I swore,
Tho' curs'd, that thou may'st never see him more.

Enter ALEXANDER, HEPHESTION, CLYTUS, &c.

Alex. Oh my Statira!—thou relentless fair!
Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them.
What shall I say to work upon thy soul!
What words, what looks, can melt thee to forgiveness?

Stat. Talk of Roxana and the conquer'd Indies,
Thy great adventures and successful love,
And I will listen to the rapt'rous tale;
But rather shun me, shun a desp'rate wretch
Resign'd to sorrow and eternal wo.

Alex. Oh, I could die, with transport die, before thee!
Wouldst thou but as I lay convuls'd in death
Cast a kind look or drop a tender tear:
Say but 't was pity one so fam'd in arms,
One who has 'scap'd a thousand deaths in battle,
For the first fault should fall a wretched victim
To jealous anger and offended love.

Rox. Am I then fall'n so low in thy esteem
That for another thou wouldst rather die
Than live for me?—How am I alter'd tell me,
Since last at Susa with repeated oaths
You swore the conquest of the world afforded
Less joy, less glory, than Roxana's love?

Alex. Take, take that conquer'd world, dispose of crowns,

And canton out the empires of the glôbe !
 But leave me, Madam, with repentant tears
 And undiffembled sorrows to atone
 The wrongs I 'ave offer'd to this injur'd excellence.

Rox. Yes, I will go, ungrateful as thou art !
 Bane to my life, and murd'rer of my peace,
 I will be gone ; this last disdain has cur'd me.
 But have a care—I warn you not to trust me,
 Or by the gods, that witness to thy perjuries,
 I'll raise a fire that shall consume you both,
 Tho' I partake the ruin.

[Exit.

Enter SYSIGAMBIS.

Stat. Alexander !—Oh, is it possible !
 Immortal gods ! can guilt appear so lovely ?
 Yet, yet I pardon, I forgive thee all.

Alex. Forgive me all ! oh catch the heav'nly sounds !
 Catch 'em ye Winds ! and as ye fly disperse
 The rapt'rous tidings thro' th' extended world,
 That all may share in Alexander's joy !

Stat. Yes, dear Deceiver ! I forgive thee all,
 But longer dare not hear thy charming tongue,
 For while I hear thee my resolves give way ;
 Be therefore quick, and take thy last farewell :
 Farewell my love—eternally farewell !

Alex. Oh, my Hephestion ! bear me or I sink.
 Why, why Statira, will you use me thus ?
 I know the cause, my working brain divines it ;
 You say you 'ave pardon'd, but with this reserve,
 Never again to bless me with your love.

Stat. Allseeing Heav'n support me !

Alex. Speak to me love ; tho' banishment and death
 Hang on thy lips, yet while thy tongue pronounces
 The musick will a while suspend my pains,
 And mitigate the horrors of despair.
 Oh, could I see you thus !

Stat. His sorrows wound my heart,
 Soft pity pleads, and I again must love him ;
 But I have sworn, and therefore cannot yield.

Alex. Go then, inhuman ! triumph in my pains,
 Feed on the pangs that rend this wretched heart,
 For now 'tis plain you never lov'd. Statira !
 Oh, I could sound that charming cruel name

Till the tir'd Echo faint with repetition,
Till all the breathless groves and quiet myrtles
Shook with my sighs, as if a tempest bow'd 'em :
My tongue could dwell for ever on that name.
Statira ! oh Statira !

Stat. Such was his looks, so melting was his voice,
Such his soft sighs, and his deluding tears,
When with that pleasing perjur'd breath avowing
His whispers trembled thro' my cred'lous ears,
And told the story of my utter ruin.
Gods ! if I stay I shall again believe :
Farewell, thou greatest pleasure, greatest pain !

Alex. I charge ye stay her ;
Oh turn thee, thou bewitching brightness, turn,
Hear my last words, and see my dying pangs !
Lo ! at your feet behold a monarch falls,
A prince who gave the conquer'd world to thee,
And thought thy love bought cheaply with the gift,
Whose glories, laurels, bloom but in thy smiles,
Now shrunk and blasted by thy cruel hate,
Untimely falls. Yet oh ! when thou shalt die -
May death be mild, as thou art cruel now,
And may thy beauties gently sink to earth,
While circling angels waft thee to repose !

Syf. Art thou turn'd savage ? is thy heart of marble ?
But if this posture move thee not to pity
I never will speak more.

Alex. Oh my Statira !
I swear, my queen, I'll not outlive our parting.
My soul grows still as death. Say, wilt thou pardon ?
'Tis all I ask. Wilt thou forgive the transports
Of a deep wounded heart, and all is well ?

Stat. Rise, and may Heav'n forgive you like Statira !

Alex. You are too gracious—Clytus, bear me hence.
When I am laid i' th' earth yield her the world.
There's something here that heaves as cold as ice,
That stops my breath. Farewell, farewell for ever !

Stat. Hold off, and let me run into his arms.
My life, my love, my lord, my Alexander !

If thy Statira's love can give thee joy
Revive, and be immortal as the gods.

Alex. My flutt'ring heart, tumultuous with its bliss,

Would leap into thy bosom: 'tis too much.
 Oh let me press thee in my eager arms,
 And strain thee hard to my transported breast!

Stat. But shall Roxana——

Alex. Let her not be nam'd.

Oh Madam! how shall I repay your goodness,
 And you my fellow-warriours, who could grieve
 For your lost king? But talk of griefs no more;
 The banquet waits, and I invite you all.
 My equals in the throne as in the grave,
 Without distinction come, and share my joy.

Clyt. Excuse me, Sir, if I for once am absent.

Alex. Excuse thee Clytus! none shall be excus'd:
 All revel out the day, 'tis my command.
 Gay as the Persian god ourself will stand
 With a crown'd goblet in our lifted hand;
 Young Ammon and Statira shall go round,
 While antick measures beat the burthen'd ground,
 And to the vaulted skies our trumpets clangours sound.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, and EUMENES.

CLYTUS.

URGE me no more, I hate the Persian dress,
 Nor should the King be angry at the rev'rence
 I owe my country—sacred are her customs,
 And honest Clytus will to death observe 'em.
 Oh! let me rot in Macedonian rags,
 Or like Calisthenes be cag'd for life,
 Rather than shine in fashions of the East.

Eum. Let me, brave Clytus, as a friend entreat you.

Heph. What virtue is there that adorns a throne,
 Exalts the heart, and dignifies the man,
 Which shines not brightly in our royal master?
 And yet perversely you'll oppose his will,
 And thwart an innocent unhurtful humour.

Clyt. Unhurtful! oh! 'tis monstrous affectation!

Pregnant with venom in its nature black,
 And not to be excus'd!——Shall man, weak man!
 Exact the rev'rence which we pay to Heav'n,
 And bid his fellow-creatures kneel before him,
 And yet be innocent? Hephestion, no;
 The pride that lays a claim to adoration
 Insults our reason and provokes the gods.

Eum. Yet what was Jove, the god whom we adore?
 Was he not once a man, and rais'd to heav'n
 For gen'rous acts and virtues more than human?

Heph. By all his thunder and his sov'reign pow'r
 I'll not believe the world yet ever felt
 An arm like Alexander's.——Not that god
 You nam'd, tho' riding in a car of fire,
 Could in a shorter space do greater deeds,
 Or more effectually have taught mankind
 To bend submissive and confess his sway.

Clyt. I tell you, boy, that Clytus loves the King
 As well as you or any foldier here;
 Yet I disdain to-sooth his growing pride:
 The hero charms me but the god offends.

Heph. Then go not to the banquet.

Clyt. Why, I was bid,
 Young minion, was I not, as well as you?
 I'll go, my friend, in this old habit, thus,
 And laugh, and drink the King's health heartily;
 And while you blushing bow your heads to earth,
 And hide them in the dust——I'll stand erect,
 Straight as a spear, the pillar of my country,
 And be by so much nearer to the gods.

Heph. But see, the King appears.

*Enter ALEXANDER, STATIRA, SYSIGAMBIS, PARISATIS,
 and Attendants.*

Par. Oh, gracious Monarch!
 Spare him, oh spare Lysimachus's life!
 I know you will——the brave delight in mercy.

Alex. Shield me, Statira, shield me from her sorrows.

Par. Save him, oh save him, ere it be too late!
 Speak the kind word; let not your soldier perish
 For one rash action by despair occasion'd.
 I'll follow thus, for ever on my knees;
 You shall not pass. Statira, oh entreat him!

Alex. Oh Madam! take her, take her from about me;
Her streaming eyes assail my very soul,
And shake my best resolves.

Stat. Did I not break
'Thro' all for you? Nay, now my Lord, you must:
By all th' obedience I have paid you long,
By all your passion, sighs, and tender looks,
Oh save a prince whose only crime is love!

Syf. I had not join'd in this bold suit my son,
But that it adds new lustre to your honours.

Alex. Honour! what's that? Has not Statira said it?
Were I the king of the blue firmament,
And the bold Titans should again make war,
Tho' my resistless thunders were prepar'd,
By all the gods she should arrest my arm
Uplifted to destroy them! Fly, Hephestion,
Fly, Clytus; snatch him from the jaws of death,
And to the royal banquet bring him straight,
Bring him in triumph, fit for loads of honour.

[*Excunt Hephestion, &c.*]

Stat. Why are you thus beyond expression kind?
Oh my Lord! my raptur'd heart,
By gratitude and love at once inflam'd,
With wild emotion flutters in my breast;
Oh teach it then, instruct it, how to thank you!

Alex. Excellent woman!

'Tis not in nature to support such joy.

Stat. Go, my best love; unbend you at the banquet;
Indulge in joy, and laugh your cares away;
While in the bowers of great Semiramis
I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,
And crown it as the altar of our loves,
Where I will lay me down and softly mourn,
But never close my eyes till you return. [*Exit Statira.*]

Alex. Is she not more than mortal can desire,
As Venus lovely and as Dian chaste?
And yet I know not why our parting shocks me;
A ghastly paleness sat upon her brow,
Her voice like dying echoes fainter grew,
And as I wrung her by the rosy fingers
Methought the strings of my great heart were crack'd.
What could it mean? Forward, Leomachus.

Enter ROXANA, CASSANDER, and POLYPERCHON.

Why, Madam, gaze you thus?

Rox. For a last look,

And to imprint the memory of my wrongs,
Roxana's wrongs, on Alexander's mind.

Alex. On to the banquet.

[*Ex. Alex. &c.*]

Rox. Ha! with such disdain!

So unconcern'd! Oh I could tear myself,
Him, you, and all the hateful world, to atoms.

Cas. Still keep this spirit up, preserve it still,
And know us for your friends: we like your rage:
Here in the sight of Heav'n Cassander swears,
Unaw'd by death, to second your revenge:
Speak but the word, and swift as thought can fly
The tyrant falls a victim to your fury.

Rox. Shall he then die? shall I consent to kill him?
I that have lov'd him with that eager fondness,
Shall I consent to have him basely murder'd,
And see him clasp'd in the cold arms of Death?
No, Cassander,

Worlds should not tempt me to the deed of horror.

Poly. The weak fond scruples of your love might pass
Was not the empire of the world concern'd;
But, Madam, think when time shall teach his tongue,
How will the glorious infant which you bear
Arraign his partial mother for refusing
To fix him on the throne which here we offer?

Cas. If Alexander lives you cannot reign,
Nor will your child: old Syfigambis plans
Your sure destruction; boldly then prevent her:
Give but the word and Alexander dies.

Poly. Not he alone, the Persian race shall bleed:
At your command one universal ruin
Shall like a deluge overwhelm the eastern world,
Till gloriously we raise you to the throne.

Rox. But till the mighty ruin be accomplish'd
Where can Roxana fly th' avenging arms
Of those who must succeed this godlike man?

Cas. Would you vouchsafe in these expanded arms
To seek a refuge, what could hurt you here?
There you might reign with undiminish'd lustre
Queen of the East, and empress of my soul.

Rox. Disgrac'd Roxana! whither art thou fall'n?
Till this curs'd hour I never was unhappy:
There's not one mark of former majesty
To awe the slave that offers at my honour.

Cas. Impute not, Madam, my unbounded passion
To want of rev'rence—I have lov'd you long.

Rox. Peace, villain! peace, and let me hear no more.
Think'st thou I'd leave the bosom of a god
And stoop to thee, thou moving piece of earth!
Hence from my sight, and never more presume
To meet my eyes; for mark me, if thou dar'st,
'To Alexander I'll unfold thy treason,
Whose life, in spite of all his wrongs to me,
Shall still be sacred, and above thy malice.

Cas. By your own life, the greatest oath, I swear
Cassander's passion from this hour is dumb,
And as the best atonement I can make
Statira dies, the victim of your vengeance.

Rox. Cassander, rise; 't is ample expiation:
Yes, rival, yes——this night shall be thy last;
This night I know is destin'd for thy triumph,
And gives my Alexander to thy arms.
Oh murd'rous thought!

Poly. The bow'rs of great Semiramis are made
The scene of love; Perdiccas holds the guard.

Cas. Now is your time, while Alexander revels,
And the whole court reechoes with his riot,
To end her, and with her to end your fears.
Give me but half the Zogdian slaves that wait you
And deem her dead; nor shall a soul escape
That serves your rival to disperse the news.

Rox. By me they die Perdiccas and Statira;
Hence with thy aid, I neither ask nor want it,
But will myself conduct the slaves to battle.
Were she to fall by any arm but mine
Well might she murmur and arraign her stars;
'Tis life well lost to die by my command.
Rival, rejoice, and pleas'd resign thy breath;
Roxana's vengeance grants thee noble death.

Cas. All but her Jove this Semele disdains.
We must be quick——she may perhaps betray
The great design, and frustrate our revenge.

[Exit.

Poly. Has Philip got instructions how to act?

Cas. He has my friend, and, faithful to our cause,
Resolves to execute the fatal order.

Bear him this vial—it contains a poison
Of that exalted force, that deadly nature,
Should Æsculapius drink it in five hours
(For then it works) the god himself were mortal:
I drew it from Nonacris' horrid spring;
Mix'd with his wine a single drop gives death,
And sends him howling to the shades below.

Poly. I know its pow'r, for I have seen it try'd;
Pains of all sorts thro' ev'ry nerve and art'ry
At once it scatters—burns at once, and freezes,
Till by extremity of torture forc'd.
The soul consents to leave her joyless home,
And seek for ease in worlds unknown to this.

Cas. Now let us part: with Theſſalus and Philip
Haſte to the banquet—at his ſecond call
Let this be giv'n him, and it crowns our hopes.
Now, Alexander, now, we'll ſoon be quits;
Death for a blow is intereſt indeed.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *the palace.*

ALEXANDER, PERDICCAS, CASSANDER, POLYPERCHON,
EUMENES, *discovered at a banquet, &c.*

[*A flourish of trumpets.*]

Alex. To our immortal health and our fair queen's:
All drink it deep; and while the bowl goes round
Mars and Bellona join to make us muſick;
A thouſand bulls be offer'd to the Sun,
White as his beams; ſpeak the big voice of war;
Beat all our drums, and ſound our ſilver trumpets;
Provoke the gods to follow our example
In bowls of nectar and replying thunder.

[*Flourish of trumpets.*]

Enter CLYTUS, HEPHESTION, and LYSIMACHUS *bloody.*

Clyt. Long live the King! long live great Alexander!
And conqueſt crown his arms with deathleſs laurels,
Propitious to his friends, and all he favours.

Alex. Did I not give command you ſhould preſerve
Lyſimachus?

Heph. Dread Sir! you did.

Alex. What then

Portend these bloody marks?

Heph. Ere we arriv'd

Perdiccas had already plac'd the prince

In a lone court, all but his hands unarm'd.

Clyt. On them were gauntlets; such was his desire,
In death to shew the difference betwixt
The blood of Æacus and common men.

Forth issuing from his den amaz'd we saw

The horrid savage, with whose hideous roar

The palace shook: his angry eyeballs glaring

With triple fury menac'd death and ruin.

Heph. With unconcern the gallant prince advanc'd:

Now, Parifatis, be the glory thine,

But mine the danger, were his only words;

For as he spoke the furious beast descry'd him,

And rush'd outrageous to devour his prey.

Clyt. Agile and vigorous, he avoids the shock

With a slight wound, and as the lion turn'd

Thrust gauntlet arm and all into his throat,

And with Herculean strength tears forth the tongue:

Foaming and bloody, the disabled savage

Sunk to the earth, and plough'd it with his teeth,

While with an active bound your conqu'ring soldier

Leap'd on his back, and dash'd his scull in pieces.

Alex. By all my laurels 't was a godlike act!

And 't is my glory as it shall be thine

That Alexander could not pardon thee.

Oh my brave soldier! think not all the pray'rs

And tears of the lamenting queens could move me

Like what thou hast perform'd: grow to my breast.

Lys. Thus, self-condemn'd, and conscious of my guilt,
How shall I stand such unexampled goodness?

Oh, pardon Sir the transports of despair,

The frantick outrage of ungovern'd love!

Ev'n when I shew'd the greatest want of rev'rence

I could have dy'd with rapture in your service.

Alex. Lyfimachus, we both have been transported;

But from this hour be certain of my heart.

A lion be the impress of thy shield,

And that gold armour we from Porus won

Thy King presents thee——But thy wounds ask rest.

Lys. I have no wounds dread Sir! or if I had,
Were they all mortal they should stream unminded
When Alexander was the glorious health.

Alex. Thy hand Hephæstion: clasp him to thy heart,
And wear him ever near thee. Parisatis
Shall now be his who serves me best in war.
Neither reply, but mark the charge I give;
Live, live as friends—you will, you must, you shall:
'Tis a god gives you life.

Clyt. Oh monstrous vanity!

Alex. Ha! what says Clytus? who am I?

Clyt. The son
Of good King Philip.

Alex. By my kindred gods
'Tis false. Great Ammon gave me birth.

Clyt. I've done.

Alex. Clytus, what means that dress? Give him a robe
Take it and wear it. [there.]

Clyt. Sir, the wine, the weather,
Has heated me: besides, you know my humour.

Alex. Oh, 'tis not well! I'd rather perish, burn,
Than be so singular and froward.

Clyt. So would I——
Burn, hang, drown, but in a better cause—
I'll drink or fight for sacred majesty
With any here. Fill me another bowl.
Will you excuse me?

Alex. You will be excused:
But let him have his humour; he is old.

Clyt. So was your father Sir; this to his memory:
Sound all the trumpets there.

Alex. They shall not sound
Till the King drinks. Sure I was born to wage
Eternal war. All are my enemies,
Whom I could tame—But let the sports go on.

Lys. Nay Clytus, you that could advise so well—

Alex. Let him persist, be positive, and proud,
Envious and sullen, 'mongst the nobler souls,
Like an infernal spirit that hath stole
From hell, and mingled with the mirth of gods.

Clyt. When gods grow hot no difference I know.

'Twixt them and devils—Fill me Greek wine—yet—
Yet fuller—I want spirits.

Alex. Let me have musick.

Clyt. Musick for boys—Clytus would hear the groans
Of dying soldiers and the neigh of steeds;
Or if I must be pester'd with shrill sounds
Give me the cries of matrons in sack'd towns.

Heph. Let us, Lyfimachus, awake the King;
A heavy gloom is gath'ring on his brow.
Kneel all, with humblest adoration kneel,
And let a health to Jove's great son go round.

Alex. Sound, sound, that all the universe may hear.

[*A loud flourish of trumpets.*]

Oh for the voice of Jove! the world should know
The kindness of my people.—Rise, oh rise!
My hands, my arms, my heart, are ever yours.

Clyt. I did not kiss the earth, nor must your hand—
I am unworthy Sir.

Alex. I know thou art:

Thou enviest the great honour of thy master.
Sit all my friends. Now let us talk of war,
The noblest subject for a soldier's mouth,
And speak, speak freely, else you love me not.
Who think you was the greatest general
That ever led an army to the field?

Heph. A chief so great, so fortunately brave,
And justly so renown'd, as Alexander
The radiant sun, since first his beams gave light,
Never yet saw.

Lys. Such was not Cyrus or the fam'd Alcides,
Nor great Achilles, whose tempestuous sword
Laid Troy in ashes, tho' the warring gods
Oppos'd him.

Alex. Oh, you flatter me!

Clyt. They do indeed, and yet you love 'em for't,
But hate old Clytus for his hardy virtue.
Come, shall I speak a man with equal bravery;
A better gen'ral, and experter soldier?

Alex. I should be glad to learn: instruct me Sir.

Clyt. Your father Philip—I have seen him march,
And fought beneath his dreadful banner, where
The boldest at this table would have trembled.
Nay, frown not Sir, you cannot look me dead.

When Greeks join'd Greeks then was the tug of war!
 The labour'd battle sweat, and conquest bled.
 Why should I fear to speak a bolder truth
 Than e'er the lying priests of Ammon told you?
 Philip fought men but Alexander women.

Alex. All envy, spite and envy, by the gods!
 Is then my glory come to this at last
 To conquer women! Nay, he said the stoutest,
 The stoutest here, would tremble at his dangers.
 In all the sickness, all the wounds, I bore,
 When from my reins the jav'lin's head was cut,
 Lyfimachus, Hephestion, speak Perdiccas,
 Did I once tremble? Oh, the cursed falsehood!
 Did I once shake or groan, or act beneath
 The dauntless resolution of a king?

Lyf. Wine has transported him.

Alex. No, 't is mere malice.

I was a woman too at Oxydrace,
 When planting on the walls a scaling ladder
 I mounted, spite of show'rs of stones, bars, arrows,
 And all the lumber which they thunder'd down.
 When you beneath cry'd out, and spread your arms,
 That I should leap among you, did I so?

Lyf. Dread Sir! the old man knows not what he says.

Alex. Was I woman when, like Mercury,
 I leap'd the walls and flew amidst the foe,
 And like a baited lion dy'd myself
 All over in the blood of those bold hunters,
 Till spent with toil I battled on my knees,
 Pluck'd forth the darts that made my shield a forest,
 And hurl'd 'em back with most unconquer'd fury,
 Then shining in my arms I sunn'd the field,
 Mov'd, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war?

Clyt. 'Twas all bravado; for before you leap'd
 You saw that I had burst the gates asunder.

Alex. Oh, that thou wert but once more young and vi-
 g'rous,
 That I might strike thee prostrate to the earth,
 For this audacious lie, thou feeble dotard!

Clyt. I know the reason why you use me thus;
 I sav'd you from the sword of bold Rhefaces,

Else had your godship slumber'd in the dust,
And most ungratefully you hate me for it.

Alex. Hence from the banquet : thus far I forgive thee.

Clyt. First try (for none can want forgiveness more)
To have your own bold blasphemies forgiv'n,
The shameful riots of a vicious life,
Philotas' murder.

Alex. Ha ! what said the traitor ?

Heph. Clytus, withdraw ; Eumenes, force him hence :
He must not tarry : drag him to the door.

Clyt. No, let him send me if I must be gone,
To Philip, Atalaus, Calisthenes,
To great Parmenio, and his slaughter'd sons.

Alex. Give me a javelin.

Heph. Hold, mighty Sir !

Alex. Sirrah ! off,

Lest I at once strike thro' his heart and thine.

Lys. Oh, sacred Sir ! have but a moment's patience.

Alex. What ! hold my arms ? I shall be murder'd here,
Like poor Darius by my barb'rous subjects.
Perdiccas, sound our trumpets to the camp ;
Call all my soldiers to the court : nay, haste,
For there is treason plotting 'gainst my life,
And I shall perish ere they come to save me.
Where is the traitor ?

Clyt. Sure there is none amongst us,
But here I stand—honest Clytus,
Whom the King invited to the banquet.

Alex. Begone to Philip, Atalaus, Calisthenes,

[Stabs him.

And let bold subjects learn by thy example
Not to provoke the patience of their prince.

Clyt. The rage of wine is drown'd in gushing blood.
Oh Alexander ! I have been to blame :
Hate me not after death ; for I repent
That I so far have urg'd your noble nature.

Alex. What's this I hear ! say on, my dying soldier.

Clyt. I should have kill'd myself had I but liv'd
To be once sober—Now I fall with honour ;
My own hands would have brought foul death. Oh, par-
don !

[Dies.

Alex. Then I am lost: what has my vengeance done!
Who is it thou hast slain? Clytus! what was he?
The faithfullest subject, worthiest counsellor,
The bravest soldier, he who sav'd thy life,
Fighting bareheaded at the river Granick,
And now he has a noble recompense!
For a rash word, spoke in the heat of wine,
The poor the honest Clytus thou hast slain,
Clytus, thy friend, thy guardian, thy preserver!

Heph. Remove the body, it inflames his sorrow.

Alex. None dare to touch him: we must never part.
Cruel Hephestion and Lyfimachus,
That had the pow'r, yet wou'd not hold me. Oh!

Lyf. Dear Sir we did.

Alex. I know ye did; ye held me
Like a wild beast, to let me go again
With greater violence.—Oh, ye've undone me!
Excuse it not; you that cou'd stop a lion
Cou'd not turn me! ye should have drawn your swords,
And barr'd my rage with their advancing points,
Made reason glitter in my dazzled eyes
Till I had seen the precipice before me:
That had been noble, that had shewn the friend;
Clytus wou'd so have done to save your lives.

Lyf. When men shall hear how highly you were urg'd—

Alex. No; you have let me stain my rising glory,
Which else had ended brighter than the sun.
Oh! I am all a blot, which seas of tears
And my heart's blood can never wash away!
Yet 'tis but just I try, and on the point
Still reeking hurl my black polluted breast.

Heph. Oh, sacred Sir!—it shall not—must not be.

Lyf. Forgive, dread Sir!—forgive my pious hands,
That dare in duty to disarm my master.

Alex. Yes, cruel men! ye now can shew your strength:
Here's not a slave but dares oppose my justice,
Yet none had courage to prevent this murder;
But I will render all endeavours vain
That tend to save my life—here will I lie

[Falls on Clytus.

Close to my murder'd soldier's bleeding side,

Thus clasping his cold body in my arms
Till death like his has clos'd my eyes for ever.

Enter PERDICCAS.

Per. Treason! foul treason! Hephestion, where's the King?

Heph. There, by old Clytus' side, whom he hath slain.

Per. Rise, sacred Sir! and haste to save the queen.

Roxana, fill'd with furious jealousy,
Came with a guard unmark'd; she gain'd the bow'r,
And broke upon me with such sudden fury
That all have perish'd who oppos'd her rage.

Alex. What says Perdiccas? is the queen in danger?

Per. Haste, Sir, or she dies.

Alex. Thus from the grave I rise to save my love:
All draw your swords, on wings of lightning move,
Young Ammon leads you, and the cause is love.

When I rush on sure none will dare to stay,
'Tis Beauty calls, and Glory leads the way. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE, *the bower of Semiramis.*

STATIRA *discovered asleep.*

STATIRA.

BLESS me, ye Pow'rs above, and guard my virtue!
Where are you fled, dear shades? where are you fled?
'Twas but a dream, and yet I saw and heard
My royal parents, who, while pious care
Sat on their faded cheeks, pronounc'd with tears,
Tears such as angels weep, this hour my last.
But hence with fear—my Alexander comes,
And fear and danger ever fled from him.
Wou'd that he were here!
For oh I tremble, and a thousand terrors
Rush in upon me and alarm my heart!
But hark! 'tis he, and all my fears are fled:
My life, my joy, my Alexander, comes!

Rox. within.] Make fast the gate with all its massy bars;

At length we 'ave conquer'd this stupendous height,
And reach'd the grove.

Stat. Ye guardian gods defend me!
Roxana's voice! then all the vision's true,
And die I must.

Enter ROXANA.

Rox. Secure the brazen gate.
Where is my rival? 't is Roxana calls.

Stat. And what is she who with such tow'ring pride
Wou'd awe a princess that is born above her?

Rox. Behold this dagger!—'t is thy fate Statira!
Behold, and meet it as becomes a queen.

Fain wou'd I find thee worthy of my vengeance;
Here, take my weapon then, and if thou dar'st—

Stat. How little know'st thou what Statira dares!

Yes, cruel woman! yes, I dare meet death
With a resolve at which thy coward heart
Wou'd shrink; for terror haunts the guilty mind,
While conscious innocence, that knows no fear,
Can smiling pass, and scorn thy idle threats.

Rox. Return, fair insolent! return, I say:
Dar'st thou, presumptuous, to invade my rights!
Restore him quickly to my longing arms,
And with him give me back his broken vows,
For perjur'd as he is he still is mine,
Or I will rend them from thy bleeding heart.

Stat. Alas, Roxana! 't is not in my pow'r;
I cannot if I wou'd—and oh, ye gods!
What were the world to Alexander's loss!

Rox. Oh, forcerefs! to thy accursed charms
I owe the frenzy that distracts my soul;
To them I owe my Alexander's loss:
Too late thou tremblest at my just revenge,
My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have way.

Stat. Yet think, Roxana, ere you plunge in murder,
Think on the horrors that must ever haunt you;
Think on the Furies, those avenging ministers
Of Heav'n's high wrath, how they will tear your soul,
All day distract you with a thousand fears,
And when by night thou vainly seek'st repose
They'll gather round and interrupt your slumbers
With horrid dreams and terrifying visions.

E

Rox. Add still, if possible, superiour horrors.
 Rather than leave my great revenge unfinish'd
 I'll dare 'em all, and triumph in the deed;
 'Therefore—— [Holds up the dagger.

Stat. Hold, hold, thy hand advanc'd in air:
 I read my sentence written in thy eyes;
 Yet oh Roxana! on thy black revenge
 One kindly ray of female pity beam,
 And give me death in Alexander's presence.

Rox. Not for the world's wide empire shouldst thou see
 Fool! but for him thou might'st unheeded live; [him.
 For his sake only art thou doom'd to die.
 The sole remaining joy that glads my soul
 Is to deprive thee of the heart I've lost.

Enter SLAVE.

Slave. Madam, the King and all his guards are come,
 With frantick rage they thunder at the gate,
 And must ere this have gain'd admittance.

Rox. Ha!
 Too long I've trifled. Let me then redeem
 The time mispent, and make great vengeance sure.

Stat. Is Alexander, oh ye gods! so nigh,
 And can he not preserve me from her fury?

Rox. Nor he nor Heav'n shall shield thee from my ju-
 Die forc'res, die, and all my wrongs die with thee! [sticc.
 [Stabs her.

Alex. without.] Away, ye slaves! stand off—quick let
 me fly
 With lightning's wings! nor heav'n nor earth shall stop me.

Enter ALEXANDER.

Ha! oh my soul! my queen, my love, Statira!
 These wounds—are these my promis'd joys?

Stat. Alas!
 My only love, my best and dearest blessing!
 Wou'd I had dy'd before you enter'd here;
 For thus delighted, while I gaze upon thee
 Death grows more horrid, and I'm loath to leave thee.

Alex. Thou shalt not leave me—Cruel, cruel, stars!
 Oh, where's the monster, where's the horrid fiend,
 That struck at innocence and murder'd thee!

Rox. Behold the wretch who, desp'rate of thy love,

In jealous madness gave the fatal blow ;
A wretch that to possess once more thy love
Wou'd with the blood of millions stain her soul.

Alex. To dungeons, tortures, drag her from my sight.

Stat. My soul is on the wing : oh come my Lord,
Haste to my arms, and take a last farewell.

Thus let me die. Oh ! oh !

Alex. Look up my love.

Oh Heav'n ! and will you, will you, take her from me !

Stat. Farewell, my most lov'd Lord : ah me ! farewell !
Yet ere I die grant this request.

Alex. Oh speak,

That I may execute before I follow thee.

Stat. Leave not the world till Heav'n demands you. Spare
Roxana's life—'Twas love of you that caus'd
The death she gave me. And oh ! sometimes think,
Amidst your revels, think on your poor queen,
And ere the cheerful bowl salutes your lips
Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy. [Dies.

Alex. Yet ere thou tak'st thy flight—She's gone, she's
All, all is hush'd, no musick now is heard ; [gone !
The roses wither, and the fragrant breath
That wak'd their sweets shall never wake 'em more !

Rox. Weep not, my Lord ! no sorrow can recall her.
Oh turn your eyes, and in Roxana's arms
You'll find fond love and everlasting truth.

Alex. Hence from my sight, and thank my dear Statira
That yet thou art alive.

Rox. Oh, take me to your arms :
In spite of all your cruelty I love you ;
Yes, thus I'll fasten on your sacred robe,
Thus on my knees for ever cling around thee,
Till you forgive me, or till death divide us.

Alex. Hence, Fury, hence : there's not a glance of thine
But like a basilisk comes wing'd with death.

Rox. Oh speak not thus to one who kneels for mercy !
Think for whose sake it was I madly plung'd
Into a crime abhorrent to my nature.

Alex. Off, murd'refs, off ! for ever shun my sight ;
My eyes detest thee, for thy soul is ruin.

E ij

Rox. Barbarian! yes, I will for ever shun thee.
Repeated injuries have steel'd my heart,
And I cou'd curse myself for being kind.
If there is any majesty above
That has revenge in store for perjur'd love,
Send, Heav'n, the swiftest ruin on his head!
Strike the destroyer! lay the victor dead!
Kill the——

But what are curses? curses will not kill,
Nor ease the tortures I am doom'd to feel.

Alex. Oh my fair star, I shall be shortly with thee!
What means this deadly dew upon my forehead?
My heart too heaves——

Cas. The poison works.

Enter EUMENES.

Eum. Pardon, dread Sir! a fatal messenger:
The royal Syfigambis is no more.
Struck with the horror of Statira's fate
She soon expir'd, and with her latest breath
Left Parisatis to Lyfimachus.
But what I fear most deeply will affect you,
Your lov'd Hephestion's——

Alex. Dead! then he is blest!
But here, here lies my fate. Hephestion, Clytus!
My vict'ries all for ever folded up
In this dear body. Here my banner's lost,
My standard's triumphs gone.
Oh when shall I be mad! Give orders to
The army that they break their shields, swords, spears,
Pound their bright armour into dust——Away.
Is there not cause to put the world in mourning?
Burn all the spires that seem to meet the sky,
Beat down the battlements of ev'ry city,
And for the monument of this lov'd creature
Root up these bow'rs, and pave 'em all with gold;
Draw dry the Ganges, make the Indies poor,
To deck her tomb; no shrine nor altar spare,
But strip the pomp from gods to place it there. [*Exit.*

Enter THESSALUS.

Cas. He's gone—but whither—follow Thessalus,
Attend his steps, and let me know what passes.

[*Exit Thessalus.*

Vengeance, lie still, thy cravings shall be sated:
Death roams at large, the Furies are unchain'd,
And Murder plays her mighty masterpiece.

Enter POLYPERCHON, THESSALUS, and PHILIP.

Phil. Saw you the King?

Poly. Yes; with disorder'd wildness in his looks.
He rush'd along, till with a casual glance
He saw me where I stood, then stepping short,
Draw near he cry'd—and grasp'd my hand in his,
Where more than fevers rag'd in ev'ry vein.
Oh Polyperchon! I have lost my queen!
Statira's dead!—and as he spoke the tears
Gush'd from his eyes—I more than felt his pains.

Thes. Hence, hence, away!

Cas. Where is he Thessalus?

Thes. I left him circled by a crowd of princes.
The poison tears him with that height of horror
Ev'n I cou'd pity him—He call'd the chiefs,
Embrac'd 'em round—then starting from amidst 'em
Cry'd out, I come—'twas Ammon's voice; I know it—
Father, I come; but let me ere I go
Dispatch the business of a kneeling world.

Poly. No more; I hear him—we must meet anon.

Cas. In Saturn's fields—there give a loose to rapture,
Enjoy the tempest we ourselves have rais'd;
And triumph in the wreck which crowns our vengeance.

[*Exsunt.*]

SCENE, *the palace.*

ALEXANDER *with his hair dishevelled*, LYSIMACHUS, EUMENES, PERDICCAS, *and Attendants*, ALEXANDER *discovered.*

Alex. Search there; nay, probe me, search my wounded
Pull, draw it out. [reins—

Lys. We have search'd, but find no hurt.

Alex. Oh, I am shot! a forked burning arrow
Sticks cross my shoulders: the sad venom flies
Like lightning thro' my flesh, my blood, my marrow.

Lys. How fierce his fever!

Alex. Ha! what a change of torments I endure!
A bolt of ice runs hissing thro' my bowels;
'Tis sure the arm of Death: give me a chair;

Cover me, for I freeze, and my teeth chatter
And my knees knock together.

Eum. Have mercy Heav'n!

Alex. I burn, I burn again:

The war grows wondrous hot: hey for the Tigris!
Bear me, Bucephalus, amongst the billows.

[Jumps into the chair.]

Oh 't is a noble beast! I would not change him
For the best horse the Sun has in his stable,
For they are hot, their mangers full of coals,
Their manes are flakes of lightning, curls of fires,
And their red tails like meteors whisk about.

Lys. Help all; Eumenes, help.

Alex. Ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughter.
Parmenio, Clytus, do you see yon' fellow,
That ragged soldier, that poor tatter'd Greek?
See how he puts to flight the gaudy Persians
With nothing but a rusty helmet on, thro' which
The grisly bristles of his pushing beard
Drive 'em like pikes—Ha, ha, ha!

Per. How wild he talks!

Lys. Yet warring in his wildness.

Alex. Sound, sound! keep your ranks close. Ay, now
Oh the brave din, the noble clank, of arms! *[they come;]*
Charge, charge apace, and let the phalanx move.
Darius comes—ay, 't is Darius,
I see, I know, him by the sparkling plumes,
And his gold chariot drawn by ten white horses;
But like a tempest thus I pour upon him——
He bleeds; with that last blow I brought him down:
He tumbles; take him, snatch th' imperial crown.
They fly, they fly! Follow, follow—Victoria!
Victoria! Victoria!—— *[Leaps into the soldiers' arms.]*

Per. Let's bear him softly to his bed.

Alex. Hold, the least motion gives me sudden death;
My vital spirits are quite parch'd, burnt up,
And all my smoky entrails turn'd to ashes.

Lys. When you, the brightest star that ever shone,
Shall set it must be night with us for ever.

Alex. Let me embrace you all before I die.

[All kneel and weep.]

Weep not my dear Companions! the good gods
Shall send ye in my stead a nobler prince,
One that shall lead ye forth with matchless conduct.

Lys. Break not our hearts with such unkind expressions.

Per. We will not part with you, nor change for Mars.

Alex. Perdiccas, take this ring,

And see me laid in the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Lys. To whom does your dread Majesty bequeath
The empire of the world?

Alex. To him that is most worthy.

Per. When will you, sacred Sir! that we should give
To your great memory those divine honours
Which such exalted virtue does deserve?

Alex. When you are all most happy and in peace.
Your hands—Oh father! if I have discharg'd

The duty of a man to empire born,

If by unwearied toil I have deserv'd

The vast renown of thy adopted son,

Accept this soul which thou didst first inspire,

And which this sigh thus gives thee back again! [*Dies.*

Lys. There fell the pride and glory of the war.

If there be treason let us find it out,

Lyfimachus stands forth to lead you on,

And swears by these most honour'd dear remains

He will not taste those joys which beauty brings

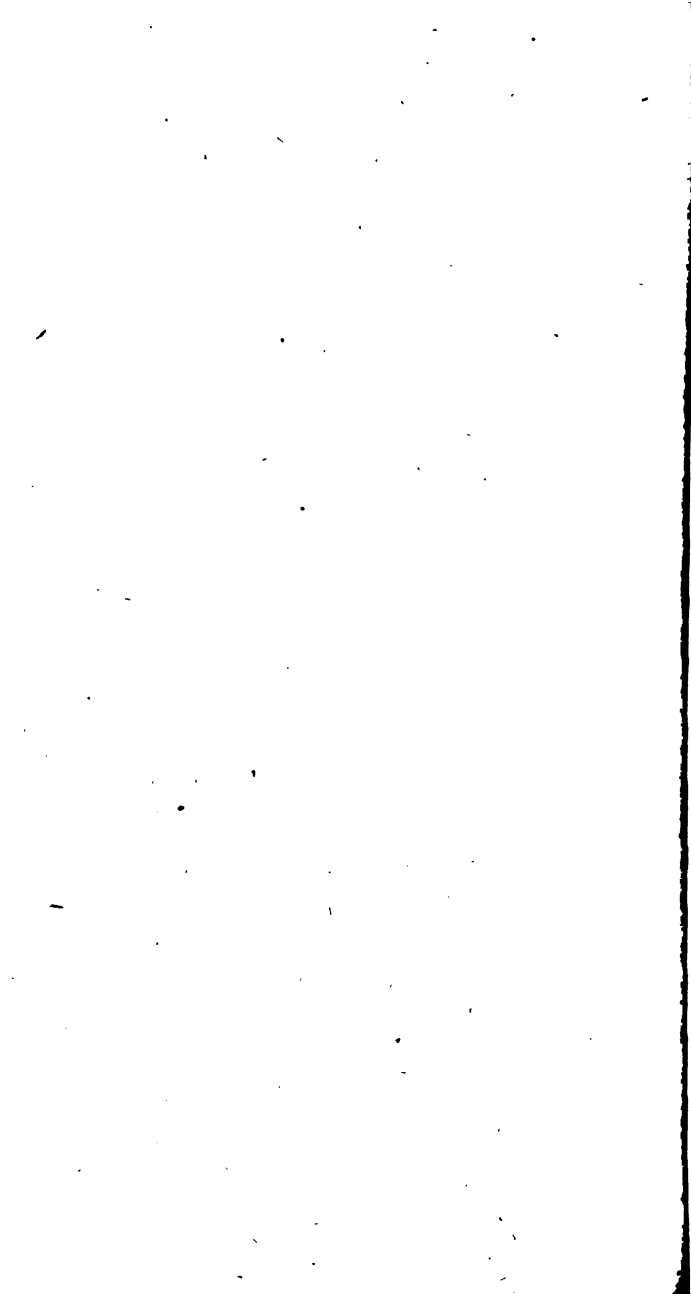
Until he has reveng'd the best of kings.

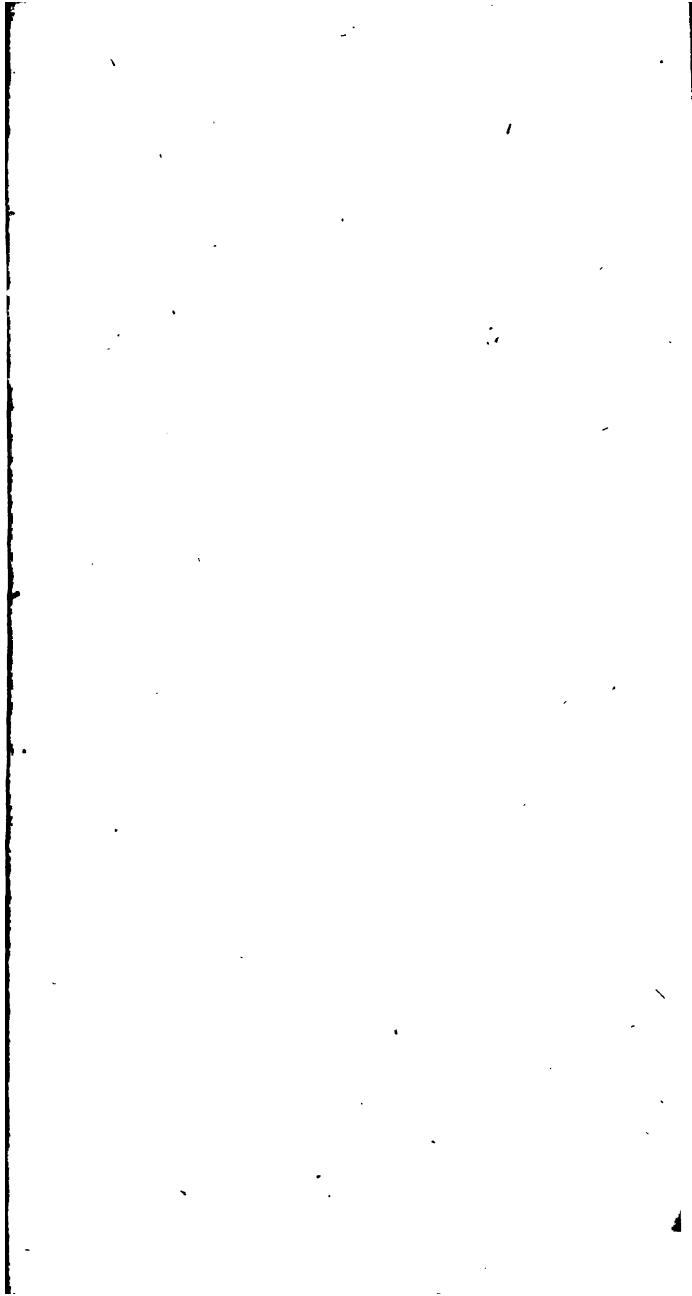
EPILOGUE.

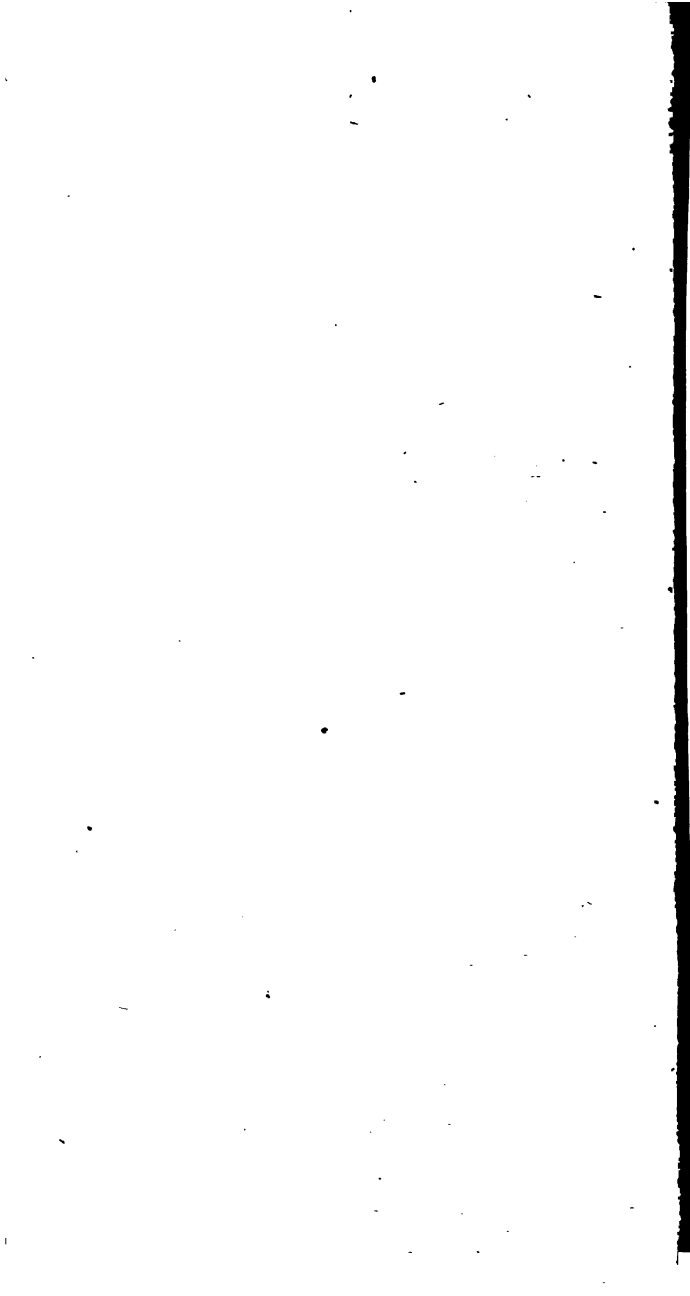
*W*HATE'ER they mean, yet ought they to be curst
 Who this censorious age did polish first,
 Who the best play for one poor error blame,
 As priests against our ladies' arts declaim,
 And for one patch both soul and body damn.
 But what does more provoke the actor's rage,
 (For we must show the grievance of the stage)
 Is that our women which adorn each play,
 Bred at our cost, become at length our prey:
 While green and sour like trees we bear them all,
 But when they're mellow straight to you they fall;
 You watch 'em bare and squab, and let 'em rest,
 But with the first young down you snatch the nest—
 Pray leave those poaching tricks if you are wise,
 Ere we take out our letters of reprisal;
 For we have vow'd to find a sort of toys
 Known to black friars, a tribe of chopping boys;
 If once they come they'll quickly spoil your sport;
 There's not one lady will receive your court:
 But for the youth in petticoats run wild,
 With oh the archest wag, the sweetest child,
 The panting breast, white hands, and lily feet!
 No more shall your pass'd thoughts with pleasure meet:
 The woman in boy's clothes all boy shall be,
 And never raise your thoughts above the knee.
 Well, if our women knew how false you are,
 They wou'd stay here, and this new trouble spare:
 Poor souls! they think all gospel you relate,
 Charm'd with the noise of settling an estate;
 But when at last your appetites are full,
 And the tir'd Cupid grows with action dull,
 You'll find some trick to cut off the entail,
 And send 'em back to us all worn and stale.
 Perhaps they'll find our stage, while they have rang'd
 To some vile canting conventicle, chang'd;
 Where for the sparks who once resorted there,
 With their curl'd wigs that scented all the air,
 They'll see grave blockheads with short greasy hair,

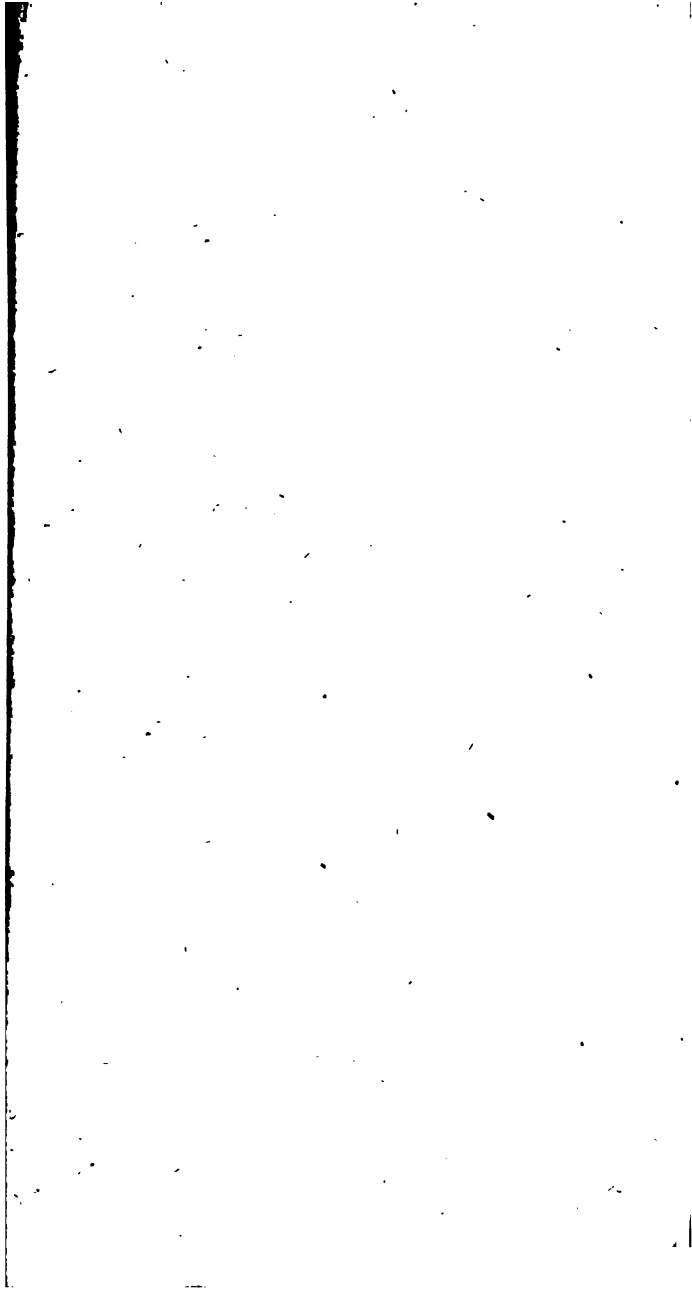
*Green aprons, steeple-hats, and collarbands,
 Dull sniv'ling rogues that ring not clap their hands,
 Where for gay punks that drew the shining crowd,
 And misses that in vizards laugh'd aloud,
 They'll hear young sisters sigh, see matrons old
 To their chopp'd cheeks their pickled kerchers hold,
 Whose zeal too might persuade, in spite to you,
 Our flying angels to augment their crew,
 While Farringdon their hero struts about 'em,
 And ne'er a damning critick dares to flout 'em.*

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MR. BENSLEY in the Character of M. AHOMET
— Such be the fate of all who braves our Law

Bell's Characteristical Edition.

MAHOMET THE IMPOSTOR.

A TRAGEDY. BY THE REV. MR. MILLER.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book, by permission of the Managers,

BY MR. HOPKINS PROMPTER.

CHARACTERISTICS.

Glorious hypocrisy! what fools are they—Who fraught with insatiate or ambitious views—
Wear not thy specious mask—Wrong will be ever surs'd and fed with blood—Ambition
Knows not conscience—Shall Mahomet—Give a new Paradise to all mankind—And let re-
morse of conscience—be the hell—Of his own breath—Oh! justice! justice!—Allconqueror
as I am I am a slave—And by the world ador'd dwell with the damn'd—My crimes have
planted scorpions in my breast—Hence, here I feel 'em—Ay, that is the hell. MAHOMET.
I'll attack him—With all the forces of enthusiasm—There lies our strength—'Tis done—
In his own veins Zaphna bore his guilt's reward—A deadly draught of poison—If the grave
be silent I am sure Hercules is.

MIRVAN.

See, thy few friends—Are come to die beside thee.

ALL.

Blast Alcanor, righteous Heaven! if e'er—This hand, yet free and uncontaminat—Shall
League with fraud or adulate a tyrant—'Tis Mahomet, and tyrants like to Mahomet—'Tis
Mirvan, and apostates like to Mirvan—I only would make tremble—Ye sacred Powers!—
Oh! support my spirit—In that firm purpose it has always held—To combat violence, fraud,
and usurpation—To pluck the spoil from the oppressor's jaws—And keep my country as I
found it, free—Hear me Mahomet—Were I doom'd or to enslave my country—Or to be-
head these blood-embued hands—Deprive me of my children—Know I'd not admit a doubt
to cloud my choice—If in death I can but serve my country—What patriot but would wish
—In so divine a cause to fall a martyr.

ALCANOR.

No one friendly beam—E'er gave me glimpse from whom I am descended—The camp of
godlike Mahomet has been—My cradle and my country—Holy pontiff!—Ready for thee to
wade thro' seas of danger—Or cope with death itself, I hither hasten'd—Place, oh place
me! in the front of battle—'Gainst odds innumerable; try me there—Or if a single combat
claim my might—The stoutest Arab may step forth and see—If Zaphna fall to greet him as
he ought—Fix'd, Palmira—Or to redeem or die a captive with thee—My father!—Fate,
canst thou ought more?

ZAPHNA.

My noble Lord, I cannot—Must not, deſist—Thou shalt not find thy Pharon slack in
aught—That tends to thy deliverance.

PHARON.

My country is not a single spot—Of such a mould, or fix'd to such a clime—'Tis the so-
cial circle of my friends—The lov'd community in which I'm link'd—And in whose wel-
fare all my wishes centre—Trust me, Zaphna, my affection for thee—Is of that pure that
disinterested nature—So free from passion's taint, I have no one wish—To have thee more
than thus; have thee my friend—Share thy lov'd converse, wait upon thy welfare—And
view thee with a sister's spotless eyes—In loving Zaphna sure I cannot err—For I have still
thought—That Heav'n itself approv'd of my affection—And gave a sanction to our mutual
love—I follow thy ev'ry footstep, tho' they lead—To the dark gulf of death—'Twas I
—That work'd his will to this unnatural deed—Upon these terms alone he could be
—And incest was the price of parricide—I will share thy fate—Unhappy Zaphna, for
I share thy guilt—I follow thee.

PALMIRA.



EDINBURG:

At the Apollo Press, by THE MARTINS, for Bell, LONDON, 1782.



TO THE RIGHT HON.

EDWARD SOUTHWELL, ESQ.

SIR,

IT was the design of my deceased husband to have presented this Piece to you. As it was always my duty and inclination to obey his commands whilst living, so I still find a secret satisfaction (though after his death) in performing what he intended.

That he might not put a trifle into your hands he waited for the opinion of the Town, and now that has been favourable, it has fallen to my-disconsolate office to make the melancholy offering.

In my unfortunate circumstances it cannot be expected (though I were capable) that I should speak either to the merits of the Piece or of the Patron; the former may possibly want a recommendation to the world, but I have often heard my husband say the latter did not.

What I have more to add is, that you would be pleased to receive this as the last testimony of his esteem and gratitude from the hands of his

Disconsolate wife,

DOROTHY MILLER.

PROLOGUE.

*To point what lengths credulity has run,
What counsels shaken, and what states undone,
What bellish fury wings th' enthusiast's rage,
And makes the troubled earth one tragick stage,
What blasphemies imposture dare advance,
And build what terrors on weak ignorance,
How fraud alone rage to religion binds,
And makes a Pandemonium of our minds;
Our Gallick bard, fir'd with these glorious views,
First to his Crusade led the tragick Muse,
Her pow'r thro' France his charming numbers bore,
But France was deaf—for all her priests were sore.*

*On English ground she makes a firmer stand,
And hopes to suffer by no hostile hand:
No clergy here usurp the freeborn mind,
Ordain'd to teach and not enslave mankind;
Religion here bids persecution cease,
Without all order and within all peace;
Truth guards her happy pale with watchful care,
And frauds th' pious find no entrance there.*

*Religion to be sacred must be free;
Men will suspect—where bigots keep the key:
Hooded and train'd like hawks th' enthusiasts fly,
And the priests' victims in their pounces die:*

A ij

*Like whelps born blind, by mother-church they're bred,
 Nor wake to sight to know themselves misled;
 Murder's the game—and to the sport unprest,
 Proud of the sin, and in the duty blest,
 The layman's but the bloodhound of the priest.
 Whoe'er thou art that dar'st such themes advance,
 To priestrid Spain repair or slavish France,
 For Juda's hire there do the devil's task,
 And trick up slav'ry in religion's mask;
 England still free no surer means requires
 To sink their sottish souls and damp their martial fires.*

*Britons! these numbers to yourselves you owe;
 Voltaire hath strength to shoot in Shakspeare's bow;
 Fame led him at his Hyppocrene to drink,
 And taught to write with Nature as to think:
 With English freedom English wit be knew,
 And from the inexhausted stream profusely drew:
 Cherish the noble bard yourselves have made,
 Nor let the frauds of France steal all our trade.
 Now of each prize the winner has the wearing
 E'en send our English stage a privateering;
 With your commission we'll our sails unfold,
 And from their loads of dross import some gold.*

Dramatis Personae.

MAHOMET,	—	—	—
MIRVAN, his general,	—	—	—
ALI,	}	Officers of Mahomet.	
HERCIDES,			
AMMON,			
ZAPHNA,	}	Captives brought up under Mahom.	
PALMIRA,			
ALCANOR, chief of the senate of Mecca,			
PHARON, his friend,	—	—	

MEN.

Drury-Lane.
 Mr. Bensley.
 Mr. Bransby.
 { Mr. Whitfield.
 { Mr. Norris.
 { Mr. Stageldice.
 { Mr. Brereton.
 { Miss Younge.
 A Gentleman.
 Mr. Davies.

SCENE MECCA.

MAHOMET*.

ACT I.

SCENE, *an apartment in the temple of MECCA.*

Enter ALCANOR and PHARON.

ALCANOR.

PHARON, no more—shall I

Fall prostrate to an arrogant impostor,
Homage in Mecca one I banish'd thence,
And incense the delusions of a rebel!
No—blast Alcanor, righteous Heav'n! if e'er
This hand, yet free and uncontaminate,
Shall league with fraud or adulate a tyrant.

Pha. August and sacred chief of Ishmael's senate,

This zeal of thine, paternal as it is,
Is fatal now—our impotent resistance.

Controls not Mahomet's unbounded progress,
But without weak'ning irritates the tyrant.

When once a citizen you well condemn'd him

As an obscure seditious innovator;

But now he is a conq'ror, prince, and pontiff,

Whilst nations numberless embrace his laws,

And pay him adoration—ev'n in Mecca

He boasts his profelytes.

Alc. Such profelytes

Are worthy of him—low untutor'd reptiles,

In whom sense only lives—most credulous still

Of what is most incredible.

Pha. Be such

Disdain'd my Lord; but mayn't the pest spread upwards

And seize the head—Say, is the senate sound?

I fear some members of that rev'rend class

Are mark'd with the contagion, who from views

Of higher pow'r and rank

Worship this rising sun, and give a sanction

To his invasions.

Alc. If, ye Pow'rs divine!

Ye mark the movements of this nether world,

And bring them to account, crush, crush those vipers,

* The lines distinguished by inverted commas are omitted in the representation.

Who singled out by a community
To guard their rights shall for a grasp of ore
Or paltry office sell 'em to the foe!

Pha. Each honest citizen, I grant, isthine,
And grateful for thy boundless blessings on them,
Would serve thee with their lives; but the approach
Of this usurper to their very walls
Strikes 'em with such a dread that ev'n these
Implore thee to accept his proffer'd peace.

Alc. Oh, people lost to wisdom as to glory!
Go, bring in pomp, and serve upon your knees
This idol, that will crush you with its weight.
Mark I abjure him: by his savage hand
My wife and children perish'd, whilst in vengeance
I carry'd carnage to his very tent,
Transfix'd to earth his only son, and wore
His trappings as a trophy of my conquest.
This torch of enmity thus lighted 'twixt us
The hand of Time itself can ne'er extinguish.

Pha. Extinguish not, but smother for a while
Its fatal flame, and greatly sacrifice
Thy private sufferings to the publick welfare.
Oh say, Alcanor, wert thou to behold
(As soon thou may'st) this fam'd metropolis
With foes begirt, behold its pining tenants
Prey on each other for the means of life,
Whilst lakes of blood and mountains of the slain
Putrify the air,
And sweep off thousands with their pois'nous steams,
Would thy slain children be aveng'd by this?

Alc. No, Pharon, no; I live not for myself:
My wife and children lost my country's now
My family.

Pha. Then let not that be lost.

Alc. 'Tis lost by cowardice.

Pha. By rashness often.

Alc. Pharon, desist.

Pha. My noble Lord, I cannot,
Must not, desist, will not, since you're possess'd
Of means to bring this insolent invader
To any terms you'll claim.

Alc. What means?

Pha. Palmira,

That blooming fair, the flow'r of all his camp,
By thee borne off in our last skirmish with him,
Seems the divine ambassadress of peace,
Sent to procure our safety. Mahomet
Has by his heralds thrice propos'd her ransom,
And bad us fix the price.

Alc. I know it Pharon:

And wouldst thou then restore this noble treasure
To that Barbarian? "Wouldst thou for the frauds,
"The deaths, the devastations, he brings on us
"Enrich his ruffian hands with such a gem,"
And render beauty the reward of rapine?—
Nay, smile not friend, nor think that at these years,
Well travell'd in the winter of my days,
I entertain a thought tow'rd's this young beauty
But what's as pure as is the western gale
That breathes upon the uncropt violet——

Pha. My Lord——

Alc. This heart, by age and grief congeal'd,
Is no more sensible to love's endearments
Than are our barren rocks to morn's sweet dew
That balmy trickles down their rugged cheeks.

Pha. My noble chief, each masterpiece of nature
Commands involuntary homage from us.

Alc. I own a tenderness unfelt before,
A sympathetick grief with ardent wishes
To make her happy fill'd my widow'd bosom:
I dread her being in that monster's pow'r,
And burn to have her hate him like myself.
'Twas on this hour I, at her modest suit,
Promis'd her audience in my own pavilion.
Pharon, go thou mean-while and see the senate
Assembled straight—I'll sound 'em as I ought.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE changes to a room of state.

Enter PALMIRA.

Pal. What means this boding terrour that usurps
In spite o' me dominion o'er my heart,
"Converting the sweet flow'r of newblown hope
"To deadly nightshade, pois'ning to my soul
"The fountain of its bliss?"—Oh holy prophet!

Shall I ne'er more attend thy sacred lessons?
 Oh Zaphna! much-lov'd youth! I feel for thee
 As for myself—But hold, my final audit
 Is now at hand—I tremble for th' event!
 Here comes my judge—Now liberty or bondage?

Enter ALCANOR.

Alc. Palmira, whence those tears? trust me fair maid!
 Thou art not fall'n into Barbarians' hands;
 What Mecca can afford of pomp or pleasure,
 To call Attention from Misfortune's lap,
 Demand and share it.

Pal. No, my generous victor!
 My suit's for nothing Mecca can afford;
 Pris'ner these two long months beneath your roof
 I've tasted such benignity and candour,
 Whilst your own hands so labour'd to beguile
 The anxious moments of captivity,
 That oft' I've call'd my tears ingratitude.

Alc. If ought remains that's in my pow'r to smooth
 The rigour of your fate, and crown your wishes,
 Why, 't would fill
 The furrows in my cheeks, and make old age
 Put on its summer's garb.

Pal. Thus low I bless thee.
 It is on you, on you alone, Alcanor,
 My whole of future happiness depends:
 Have pity then;
 Pity, Alcanor, one who's torn from all
 That's dear or venerable to her soul;
 Restore me then, restore me to my country,
 Restore me to my father, prince, and prophet.

Alc. Is slav'ry dear then? is fraud venerable?
 What country? a tumultuous wand'ring camp!

Pal. My country, Sir, is not a single spot
 Of such a mould, or fix'd to such a clime;
 No, 't is the social circle of my friends,
 The lov'd community in which I'm link'd,
 And in whose welfare all my wishes centre.

Alc. Excellent maid! Then Mecca be thy country.
 Robb'd of my children, would Palmira deign
 To let me call her child, the toil I took
 To make her destiny propitious to her

[*Kneeling*]

Would lighten the rough burthen of my own :

But no ; you scorn my country and my laws.

Pal. Can I be your's when not my own ? Your bounties
Claim and share my gratitude—but Mahomet

Claims right o'er me of parent, prince, and prophet.

Alc. Of parent, prince, and prophet ! Heav'n's ! that
Who, a scap'd felon, emulates a throne, [robber

And scoffer at all faiths proclaims a new one !

Pal. Oh, cease my Lord ; this blasphemous abuse
On one whom millions with myself adore

Does violence to my ear ; such black profaneness
Gainst Heav'n's interpreter blots out remembrance
Of favours past, and nought succeeds but horror.

Alc. Oh superstition ! thy pernicious rigours,
Inflexible to reason, truth, and nature,

Banish humanity the gentlest breasts.

Palmira, I lament to see thee plung'd

So deep in error—

Pal. Do you then reject

My just petition ? can Alcanor's goodness

Be deaf to suff'ring virtue ?

Name but the ransom,

And Mahomet will treble what you ask.

Alc. There is no ransom Mahomet can offer

Proportion'd to the prize. Trust me, Palmira,

I cannot yield thee up. What ! to a tyrant

Who wrongs thy youth, and mocks thy tender heart

With vile illusions and fanatick terrors !—

Enter PHARON.

What wouldst thou Pharon ?

Pba. From yon' western gate

Which opens on Moradia's fertile plains

Mahomet's gen'ral Mirvan hastes to greet thee.

Alc. Mirvan, that vile apostate !

Pba. In one hand

He holds a scimitar, the other bears

An olivebranch, which to our chiefs he waves,

An emblem of his suit—a martial youth,

Zaphna by name, attends him for our hostage.

Pal. apart.] Zaphna ! mysterious heav'n !

Pba. Mirvan advances

This way my Lord to render you his charge.

Alc. "Mirvan advance! how dare the traitor see me?"
 Palmira, thou retire—Pharon, be present. [*Exit Palmira.*]

Enter MIRVAN.

After six years of infamous rebellion
 Against thy native country, dost thou, Mirvan,
 Again profane with thy detested presence
 These sacred walls which once thy hands defended,
 But thy bad heart has vilely since betray'd?
 Thou poor deserter of thy country's gods,
 Thou base invader of thy country's rights,
 What wouldst thou have with me?

Mir. I'd pardon thee——

Out of compassion to thy age and suff'rings,
 And high regard for thy experienc'd valour.
 Heav'n's great apostle offers thee in friendship
 A hand could crush thee, and I come commission'd
 To name the terms of peace he deigns to tender.

Alc. He deigns to tender! insolent impostor!
 Dost thou not, Mirvan, blush
 To serve this wretch—this base of soul as birth?

Mir. Mahomet's grandeur's in himself; he shines not
 With borrow'd lustre.

Plung'd in the night of prejudice, and bound
 In fetters of hereditary faith,
 My judgment slept; but when I found him born
 To mould anew the prostrate universe
 I started from my dream, join'd his career,
 And shar'd his arduous and immortal labours.
 Once I must own I was as blind as thou;
 Then wake to glory, and be chang'd like me.

Alc. What death to honour wak'ning to such glory!

Pha. Oh, what a fall from virtue was that change!

Mir. Come, embrace our faith, reign with Mahomet,
 And cloth'd in terrors make the vulgar tremble.

Alc. 'Tis Mahomet, and tyrants like to Mahomet,
 'Tis Mirvan, and apostates like to Mirvan,
 I only would make tremble—Is it, say'st thou,
 Religion that's the parent of this rapine,
 This virulence and rage?—No; true Religion
 Is always mild, propitious, and humane,
 Plays not the tyrant, plants no faith in blood,
 Nor bears destruction on her chariot-wheels,

But stoops to polish, succour, and redress,
And builds her grandeur on the publick good.

Mir. Thou art turn'd Christian sure! some straggling
Has taught thee these tame lessons—— [monk

Alc. If the Christians
Hold principles like these, which reason dictates,
“Which all our notions of the Pow’rs divine
“Declare the social laws they meant for man,
“And all the beauties and delights of nature
“Bear witness to,” the Christians may be right;
Thy sect cannot, who, nurs’d in blood and slaughter,
Worship a cruel and revengeful being,
And draw him always with his thunder round him
As ripe for the destruction of mankind.

Mir. If clemency delights thee learn it here.
Tho’ banish’d by thy voice his native city,
Tho’ by thy hand robb’d of his only son,
Mahomet pardons thee; nay farther, begs
The hatred burning ’twixt you be extinguish’d
With reconciliation’s gen’rous tear.

Alc. I know thy master’s arts; his gen’rous tears,
Like the refreshing drops that previous fall
To the wild outrage of o’erwhelming earthquakes
Only forerun destruction;
Courage he has, not bravery,
For blood and havock are the sure attendants
On his victorious car.

Pba. Leagues he will make too——
Alc. Like other grasping tyrants, till he eyes
A lucky juncture to enlarge his bounds,
Then he’ll deride ’em, leap o’er ev’ry tie
Of sacred guarantee or sworn protection,
And when th’ oppress’d ally implores assistance
Beneath that mask invade the wish’d-for realms,
And from pure friendship take them to himself.

Mir. Mahomet fights Heav’n’s battles, bends the bow
To spread Heav’n’s laws, and to subject to faith
The iron neck of error.

Alc. Lust and ambition, Mirvan, are the springs
Of all his actions, whilst without one virtue
Disimulation, like a flatt’ring painter,
Bedecks him with the colouring of them all:

This is thy master's portrait—But no more—
My soul's inexorable, and my hate
Immortal as the cause from whence it sprang.

Mir. What cause—

Alc. The diff'rence between good and evil.

Mir. Thou talk'st to me, Alcanor, with an air
Of a stern judge, that from his dread tribunal
Intimidates the criminal beneath him :
Resume thy temper, act the minister,
And treat with me as with th' ambassador
Of Heav'n's apostle and Arabia's king.

Alc. Arabia's king! what king! who crown'd him?

Mir. Conquest—

Whilst to the style of conq'ror and of monarch
Patron of peace he'd add—Name then the price
Of peace and of Palmira—Boundless treasures,
The spoils of vanquish'd monarchs, and the stores
Of rifled provinces, are thrown before thee.
Our troops with matchless ardour hasten hither
To lay in ruin this rebellious city;
Stem then the rushing torrent : Mahomet
In person comes to claim a conference with thee
For this good purpose.

Alc. Who! Mahomet!

Mir. Yes, he conjures thou'lt grant it.

Alc. Traitor! were I sole ruler here in Mecca
I'd answer thee with chastisement—

Mir. Hot man!

I pity thy false virtue—But farewell—
And since the senate share thy pow'r in Mecca
To their serener wisdoms I'll appeal. [*Exit Mirvan.*]

Alc. I'll meet thee there, and see whose voice is victor.
Come, Pharon, aid me to repulse this traitor;
To bear him with impunity amongst us
Is treason 'gainst ourselves——Ye sacred Pow'rs,
My country's gods, that for three thousand years
Have reign'd protectors of the tribe of Ishmael,
Oh! support my spirit
In that firm purpose it has always held,
To combat violence, fraud, and usurpation,
To pluck the spoil from the oppressors' jaws,
And keep my country as I found it free. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE, PALMIRA'S apartment.

Enter PALMIRA.

PALMIRA.

CEASE, cease ye streaming instruments of wo
From your ignoble toil—Take warmth, my heart!
Collect thy scatter'd pow'rs, and brave misfortune.
In vain the stormtost mariner repines;
Were he-within to raise as great a tempest
As beats him from without it would not smooth
One boist'rous surge: impatience only throws
Discredit on mischance, and adds a shame
To our affliction.

Enter ZAPHNA.

Ha! allgracious Heav'n!
Thou, Zaphna! is it thou? what pitying angel
Guided thy steps to these abodes of bondage?
Zaph. Thou sov'reign of my soul and all its pow'rs,
Object of ev'ry fear and ev'ry wish,
Friend, sister, love, companion, all that's dear!
Do I once more behold thee, my Palmira?
Oh, I will set it down the whitest hour
That Zaphna e'er was blest with!—

Pal. Say, my hero——

Are my ills ended then? They are, they are:
Now Zaphna's here I am no more a captive
Except to him: oh, blest captivity!

Zaph. Those smiles are dearer to my raptur'd breast,
Sweeter those accents to my list'ning heart,
Than all Arabia's spices to the sense.

Pal. No wonder that my soul was so elate,
No wonder that the cloud of grief gave way,
When thou my son of comfort wert so nigh.

Zaph. Since that dire hour when on Sabaria's strand
The barb'rous foe depriv'd me of Palmira,
In what a gulf of horror and despair
Have thy imagin'd perils plung'd my soul!
Stretch'd on expiring corse for a while

To the deaf stream I pour'd out my complaint,
 And begg'd I might be number'd with the dead
 That strew'd its banks——then starting from despair
 With rage I flew to Mahomet for vengeance ;
 He, for some high mysterious purpose known
 To Heav'n and him alone, at length dispatch'd
 The valiant Mirvan to demand a truce :
 Instant on wings of lightning I pursu'd him,
 And enter'd as his hostage——fix'd, Palmira,
 Or to redeem or die a captive with thee.

Pal. Heroick youth !

Zaph. But how have these Barbarians
 Treated my fair ?

Pal. With high humanity.

I in my victor found a friend——Alcanor
 Has made me feel captivity in nothing
 But absence from my Zaphna and my friends.——

Zaph. I grieve a soul so generous is our foe :
 But now presented as a hostage to him
 His noble bearing and humanity
 Made captive of my heart ; I felt, methought,
 A new affection lighted in my breast,
 And wonder'd whence the infant ardour sprang.

Pal. Yet gen'rous as he is not all my pray'rs,
 Not all the tears I lavish at his feet,
 Can move him to restore me——

Zaph. But he shall——

Let the Barbarian know he shall, Palmira ;
 'The god of Mahomet, our divine protector,
 Whose still triumphant standard I have borne
 O'er piles of vanquish'd infidels—that pow'r
 Which brought unnumber'd battlements to earth,
 Will humble Mecca too.

Enter MIRVAN.

Well, noble Mirvan,
 Do my Palmira's chains sit loose upon her ;
 Say, is it freedom ? This presumptuous senate——

Mir. Has granted all we ask'd, all we could wish——
 The truce obtain'd the gates to Mahomet
 Flew open——

Zaph. Mahomet in Mecca say'st thou ?
 Once more in Mecca !

Pal. Transport! bid him welcome.

Zaph. Thy suff'rings then are o'er, the ebb is past,
And a full tide of hope flows in upon us.

Mir. The spirit of our prophet that inspir'd me
Breath'd such divine persuasion from my lips
As shook the reverend fathers—Sirs, cry'd I,
This fav'rite of high Heav'n, who rules in battle,
Before whose footstool tributary kings
Bow the anointed head, born here in Mecca,
Asks but to be enroll'd a senator,
And you refuse his pray'r. Deluded sages!
Altho' your conquest he requests no more
Than one day's truce, pure pity to yourselves!
To save you if he can, and you—Oh shame!—
At this a gen'ral murmur spread around,
Which seem'd propitious to us—

Zaph. Greatly carry'd!

Go on——

Mir. Then straight th' inflexible Alcanor
Flew thro' the streets, assembling all the people
To bar our prophet. Thither too I fled,
Urg'd the same arguments, exhorted, threaten'd,
Till they unhing'd the gates, and gave free passage
To Mahomet and his chiefs—In vain Alcanor
And his dishearten'd party, strove t' oppose him;
Serene and dauntless thro' the gazing crowd
With more than human majesty he mov'd,
Bearing the peaceful olive, whilst the truce
Was instantly proclaim'd——

Pal. But where's the prophet?

Mir. Reclin'd in yonder grot that joins the temple,
Attended by his chiefs.

Zaph. There let us haste

With duteous step, and bow ourselves before him. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to a spacious grotto.

MAHOMET discovered with the Alcoran before him.

Mab. Glorious hypocrisy! what fools are they
Who fraught with lullful or ambitious views
Wear not thy specious mask—Thou, Alcoran!
Hast won more battles, ta'en more cities for me,
Than thrice my feeble numbers had achiev'd
Without the succour of thy sacred impulse.

Enter HERCIDES, AMMON, and ALI.

Invincible supporters of our grandeur!
 My faithful chiefs, Hercides, Ammon, Ali!
 Go and instruct this people in my name
 That faith may dawn, and like a morning-star
 Be herald to my rising:
 Lead them to know and to adore my God;
 But above all to fear him—Lo, Palmira! [*Exe. Her. &c.*]
 Her angel-face, with unfeign'd blushes spread,
 Proclaims the purity that dwells within.

Enter MIRVAN, ZAPHNA, and PALMIRA.

[*To Palmira.*] The hand of War was ne'er before so bar-
 Never bore from me half so rich a spoil [*barous,*
 As thee my fair.

Pal. Joy to my heav'nly guardian!
 Joy to the world that Mahomet's in Mecca!

Mab. My child, let me embrace thee—How's this,
 Thou here! [*Zaphna!*]

Zaph. kneeling.] My father, chief, and holy pontiff!
 The god that thou'rt inspir'd by march'd before me.
 Ready for thee to wade thro' seas of danger,
 Or cope with death itself, I hither hasten'd
 To yield myself an hostage, and with zeal
 Prevent thy order.

Mab. 'Twas not well, rash boy:
 He that does more than I command him errs.
 As much as he who falters in his duty,
 And is not for my purpose—I obey
 My god—implicitly obey thou me.

Pal. Pardon, my gracious Lord, his wellmeant ardour.
 Brought up from tender infancy beneath
 The shelter of thy sacred patronage,
 Zaphna and I've been animated still
 By the same sentiments: alas, great Prophet!
 I've had enough of wretchedness—to languish
 A prisoner here, far both from him and you;
 Grudge me not then the ray of consolation
 His presence beam'd, nor cloud my dawning hope
 Of rising freedom and felicity.

Mab. Palmira, 'tis enough; I read thy heart—
 Be not alarm'd; tho' burden'd with the cares
 Of thrones and altars, still my guardian eye

Will watch o'er thee as o'er the universe.
Follow my gen'ral's Zaphna. Fair Palmira,
Retire, and pay your pow'rful vows to Heav'n,
And dread no wrongs but from Alcanor.

[Zaphna and Palmira go out separately.]

Mirvan——

Attend thou here—'Tis time, my trusty soldier,
My longtry'd friend, to lay unfolded to thee
The close resolves and councils of my heart.
The tedious length of a precarious siege
May damp the present ardour of my troops,
And check me in the height of my career.
Let us not give deluded mortals leisure
By reason to disperse the mystick gloom
We 'ave cast about us—Prepossession, friend,
Reigns monarch of the million—Mecca's crowd
Gaze at my rapid victories, and think
Some awful pow'r directs my arm to conquest;
But whilst our friends once more renew their efforts
To win the wav'ring people to our interest,
What think'st thou, say, of Zaphna and Palmira?

Mir. As of thy most resign'd and faithful vassals.

Mab. Oh Mirvan! they're the deadliest of my foes.

Mir. How!

Mab. Yes, they love each other—

Mir. Well—what crime?—

Mab. What crime! dost say?—Learn all my frailty then—
My life's a combat: keen austerity
Subjects my nature to abstemious bearings:
I 'ave banish'd from my lips that trait'rous liquor
That either works to practices of outrage
Or melts the manly breast to woman's weakness;
Or on the burning sands or desert rocks
With thee I bear th' inclemency of climates,
Freeze at the pole, or scorch beneath the line.
For all these toils love only can retaliate,
The only consolation or reward,
Fruit of my labours, idol of my incense,
And sole divinity that I adore;
Know then that I prefer this young Palmira
To all the ripen'd beauties that attend me,
Dwell on her accents, dote upon her smiles,

And am not mine but her's. Now judge, my friend,
How vast the jealous transports of thy master,
When at his feet he daily hears this charmer
Avow a foreign love, and, insolent,
Give Mahomet a rival!

Mir. How! and Mahomet
Not instantly revenge—

Mab. Ah! should he not?
But better to detest him know him better:
Learn then that both my rival and my love
Sprang from the loins of this audacious tyrant.

Mir. Alcanor!

Mab. Is their father; old Hercides,
'To whose sage institution I commit
My captive infants, late reveal'd it to me—
Perdition! I myself light up their flame,
And fed it till I set myself on fire.
Well, means must be employ'd: but see, the father;
He comes this way, and lanches from his eye
Malignant sparks of enmity and rage.
Mirvan, see all ta'en care of; let Hercides
With his escorte beset yon' gate; bid Ali
Make proper disposition round the temple;
This done return, and render me account
Of what success we meet with 'mongst the people:
Then, Mirvan, we'll determine or to loose
Or bridle in our vengeance as it suits. [Exit Mirvan.

Enter ALCANOR.

Mab. Why dost thou start Alcanor? whence that hor-
Is then my sight so baneful to thee? [rour!

Alc. "Heavens!"

Must I then bear this? must I meet in Mecca,
On terms of peace, this spoiler of the earth?

Mab. Approach, old man, without a blush, since Heav'n
For some high-end decrees our future union.

Alc. I blush not for myself, but thee, thou tyrant;
For thee, bad man! who com'st with serpent-guile
To sow dissention in the realms of peace:
Thy very name sets families at variance,
'Twixt son and father bursts the bonds of nature,
And scars endearment from the nuptial pillow?
"Ev'n truce with thee is a new stratagem."

And is it, insolent dissembler! thus
Thou com'st to give the sons of Mecca peace,
And me an unknown god?

Mab. Were I to answer any but Alcanor
That unknown god should speak in thunder for me,
But here with thee I'd parley as a man.

Alc. What canst thou say? what urge in thy defence?
What right hast thou receiv'd to plant new faiths,
Or lay a claim to royalty and priesthood?

Mab. The right that a resolv'd and tow'ring spirit
Has o'er the grov'ling instinct of the vulgar——

Alc. Patience, good Heav'ns! have I not known thee,
When void of wealth, inheritance, or fame, [Mahomet,
Rank'd with the lowest of the low at Mecca?

Mab. Dost thou not know, thou haughty feeble man,
That the low insect, lurking in the grass,
And the imperial eagle, which aloft
Ploughs the ethereal plain, are both alike
In the Eternal Eye—Mortals are equal:
It is not birth, magnificence, or pow'r,
But virtue only makes the difference 'twixt them.

Alc. apart.] What sacred truth from what polluted lips!

Mab. By virtue's ardent pinions borne on high
Heav'n met my zeal, gave me in solemn charge
Its sacred laws, then bid me on and publish.

Alc. And did Heav'n bid thee on and plunder too?

Mab. My law is active, and inflames the soul
With thirst of glory. What can thy dumb gods?
What laurels spring beneath their footy altars?
Thy slothful sect disgrace the humankind,
Enervate lifeless images of men!

Mine bear th' intrepid soul; my faith makes heroes.

Alc. Go preach these doctrines at Medina, where
By prostrate wretches thou art rais'd to homage.

Mab. Hear me; thy Mecca trembles at my name;
If therefore thou wouldst save thyself or city
Embrace my proffer'd friendship——What to-day
I thus solicit I'll command to-morrow.

Alc. Contract with thee a friendship! fromless man!
Know'st thou a god can work that miracle?

Mab. I do——Necessity——thy interest.

Alc. Interest is thy god, Equity is mine.

Propose the tie of this unnatural union ;
 Say, is't the loss of thy illfated son,
 Who in the field fell victim to my rage,
 Or the dear blood of my poor captive children,
 Shed by thy butchering hands?

Mab. Ay, 'tis thy children.

Mark me then well, and learn th' important secret
 Which I'm sole master of——Thy children live.

Alc. Live!

Mab. Yea——both live——

Alc. What say'st thou? Both!

Mab. Ay, both.

Alc. And dost thou not beguile me?

Mab. No, old man.

Alc. Propitious Heav'ns! Say, Mahomet, for now
 Methinks I could hold endless converse with thee,
 Say what's their portion, liberty or bondage?

Mab. Bred in my camp, and tutor'd in my law,
 I hold the balance of their destinies,
 And now 'tis on the turn——their lives or deaths——
 'Tis thine to say which shall preponderate.

Alc. Mine! can I save them? name the mighty ransom—
 If I must bear their chains double the weight,
 And I will kiss the hand that puts them on;
 Or if my streaming blood must be the purchase,
 Drain ev'ry sluice and channel of my body,
 My swelling veins will burst to give it passage.

Mab. I'll tell thee then—renounce thy Pagan faith,
 Abolish thy vain gods, and——

Alc. Ha!

Mab. Nay, more,
 Surrender Mecca to me, quit this temple,
 Assist me to impose upon the world,
 Thunder my Koran to the gazing crowd,
 Proclaim me for their prophet and their king,
 And be a glorious pattern of credulity
 To Korah's stubborn tribe. These terms perform'd
 Thy son shall be restor'd, and Mahomet's self
 Will deign to wed thy daughter.

Alc. Hear me Mahomet——

I am a father, and this bosom boasts
 A heart as tender as e'er parent bore.

After a fifteen years of anguish for them
 Once more to view my children, clasp them to me,
 And die in their embraces—melting thought!
 But were I doom'd or to enslave my country,
 And help to spread black error o'er the earth,
 Or to behold these blood-embued hands,
 Deprive me of them both—Know me then Mahomet,
 I'd not admit a doubt to cloud my choice——

[*Looking earnestly at Mahomet for some time before he speaks.*
 Farewell. [*Exit Alcanor.*

Mah. Why, fare thee well then—churlish dotard!
 Inexorable fool! Now by my arms
 I will have great revenge; I'll meet thy scorn
 With treble retribution.

Enter MIRVAN.

Well, my Mirvan,
 What say'st thou to it now?

Mir. Why, that Alcanor
 Or we must fall.

Mah. Fall then the obdurate rebel!

Mir. The truce expires to-morrow, when Alcanor
 Again is Mecca's master, and has vow'd
 Destruction on thy head: the senate too
 Have pass'd thy doom.

Mah. Those heart-chill'd paltry babblers
 Plac'd on the bench of sloth with ease can nod
 And vote a man to death; why don't the cowards
 Stand me in yonder plain?—With half their numbers
 I drove them headlong to their walls for shelter,
 And he was deem'd the wisest senator
 That enter'd first the gate; but now they think
 They've got me in the toil their spirits mount,
 And they could prove most valorous assassins——
 Well, this I like—I always ow'd my greatness
 To opposition; had I not met with struggles
 I'd been obscure—Enough—Perish Alcanor!
 He marbled up the pliant populace,
 Those dupes of novelty will bend before us
 Like osiers to a hurricane——

Mir. No time
 Is to be lost.

Mah. But for a proper arm;

For, however irksome, we must save
Appearances, and mask it with the vulgar.

Mir. True, my sage chief—What think'st thou then of

Mab. Of Zaphna, say'st thou! [Zaphna?

Mir. Yes, Alcanor's hostage—

He can in private do thee vengeance on him :

'Thy other fav'rites of maturer age,

And more discreetly zealous, would not risk it :

Youth is the stock whence grafted superstition

Shoots with unbounded vigour. He's a slave

To thy despotick faith, and urg'd by thee,

However mild his nature may appear,

Howe'er humane and noble is his spirit,

Or strong his reason, where allow'd to reason,

He would for Heav'n's sake martyr half mankind.

Mab. The brother of Palmira !

Mir. Yes, that brother,

The only son of thy outrageous foe,

And the incestuous rival of thy love.

Mab. I hate the stripling, loathe his very name ;

The manes of my son too cries for vengeance

On the curs'd fire ; but then thou know'st my love,

Know'st from whose blood she sprang ; this staggers, Mirvan ;

And yet I'm here surrounded with a gulf

Ready to swallow me ; come too in quest

Of altars and a throne—What must be done !—

My warring passions, like contending clouds

When fraught with thunder's fatal fuel, burst

Upon themselves, and rend me with the shock.

And shall enervating contagious love

Hag my aspiring spirit, sink me down

To woman's shackles, make a lapthing of me ?

Glory ! that must not be ! ambition still

And great revenge impetuous urge their claims,

And must be notic'd. Mirvan, sound this youth ;

Touch not at once upon the startling purpose,

But make due preparation.

Mir. I'll attack him

With all the forces of enthusiasm ;

There lies our strength.

Mab. First then, a solemn vow

To act whatever Heav'n by me enjoins him ;

Next omens, dreams, and visions, may be pleaded;
Hints too of black designs by this Alcanor
Upon Palmira's virtue and his life——
But to the proof—Be now propitious, Fortune,
Then love, ambition, vengeance, jointly triumph. [*Exe.*]

ACT III.

SCENE, a grand apartment.

Enter ZAPHNA and PALMIRA.

ZAPHNA.

ALCANOR claim a private conference with us!
What has he to unfold?

Pal. I tremble Zaphna.

Zaph. Time press'd too, did he say?

Pal. He did; then cast

A look so piercing on me it o'erwhelm'd
My face with deep confusion; this he mark'd,
Then starting left me.

Zaph. aside.] Ha! this gives me fear
That Mirvan's jealousies are too well grounded;
But I must not distract her tender bosom
With visionary terrors. [*To Pal.*] Both in private?

Pal. In private both.

Zaph. Her virtue and my life! [*Apart.*]
It cannot be; so reverend a form
Could ne'er be pander to such black devices.

Pal. But let us shun it Zaphna; much I fear
Alcanor has deceiv'd us: dread the treachery
Of this blood-thirsty senate. Trust me, Zaphna,
They've sworn the extirpation of our faith,
Nor care by what vile means—

Zaph. My soul's best treasure,
For whose security my ev'ry thought
Is up in arms, regardless of my own;
Shun thou Alcanor's presence. This hour, Palmira,
Mirvan, by order of our royal pontiff,
Prepares to solemnize some act of worship
Of a more hallow'd and mysterious kind
Than will admit of vulgar eye; myself
Alone am honour'd to assist.

Pal. Along!

Zaph. Yes, to devote myself by solemn vow
For some great act, of which my fair's the prize.

Pal. What act?

Zaph. No matter, since my lov'd Palmira
Shall be the glorious recompense—

Pal. Oh Zaphna!

Methinks I do not like this secret vow.

Why must I not be present! were I with thee
I should not be so anxious;

For trust me, Zaphna, my affection for thee
Is of that pure disinterested nature,

So free from passion's taint, I've no one wish
To have thee more than thus, have thee my friend,
Share thy lov'd converse, wait upon thy welfare,
And view thee with a sister's spotless eye.

Zaph. Angelick excellence!

Pal. And let me tell thee

This Mirvan, this fierce Mirvan, gives me terrors:

So far from tend'ring consolation to me

His theme is blood and slaughter. As I met him

His eyes flam'd fury, whilst in dubious phrase

He thus bespoke me—The destroying angel

Must be let loose—Palmira, Heav'n ordains

Some glorious deed for thee yet hid in darkness;

Learn an implicit reverence for its will,

And above all I warn thee fear for Zaphna.

Zaph. What could he mean? can I believe, Alcanor,
Thy fair deportment but a treach'rous mask?

Yet spite of all the rage that ought to fire me

Against this rebel to our faith and prophet

I've held me happy in his friendship,

And bondage wore the livery of choice. [my Zaphna,

Pal. How has Heav'n fraught our love-link'd hearts
With the same thoughts, aversions, and desires!

But for thy safety and our dread religion,

That thunders hatred to all infidels,

With great remorse I should accuse Alcanor.

Zaph. Let us shake off this vain remorse Palmira,

Resign ourselves to Heav'n and act its pleasure.

The hour is come that I must pledge my vow:

Doubt not but the Supreme, who claims this service,

Will prove propitious to our chaste endearments.

Farewell my love; I fly to gain the summit
Of earth's felicity—to gain Palmira.

[Exit.

Pal. Where'er I turn me here 't is all suspicion.
What means this vow? Mirvan, I like thee not:
Alcanor too distracts my tim'rous breast:
Ev'n Mahomet's self I dread whilst I invoke him.
Like one benighted 'midst a place of tombs
I gaze around me, start at ev'ry motion,
And seem hemm'd in by visionary spectres.
Allrighteous Pow'r, whom trembling I adore,
And blindly follow, oh deliver me
From these heart-rending terrours!—Ha! who's here?

Enter MAHOMET.

'Tis he! 't is Mahomet himself! kind Heav'n
Has sent him to my aid—My gracious Lord!
Protect the dear dear idol of my soul;
Save Zaphna; guard him from——

Mab. From what!—why Zaphna?
Whence this vain terroure? is he not with us?

Pal. Oh Sir, you double now my apprehensions!
Those broken accents and that eager look
Shew you have anguish smoth'ring at the heart,
And prove for once that Mahomet's a mortal.

Mab. apart.] Ha! I shall turn a traitor to myself—
Oh woman! woman! hear me; ought I not
To be enrag'd at thy profane attachment?
How could thy breast, without the keenest sting,
Harbour one thought not dictated by me?
Is that young mind I took such toil to form
Turn'd an ingrate and infidel at once?
Away, rebellious maid——

Pal. What dost thou say,
My royal Lord? Thus prostrate at your feet
Let me implore forgiveness if in aught
I have offended: talk not to me thus;
A frown from thee, my father and my king,
Is death to poor Palmira. Say then, Mahomet,
Didst thou not in this very place permit him
To tender me his vows?

Mab. apart.] “His vows! perdition!”
How the soft trait'refs racks me!—Rise Palmira—
[*Apart.*] Down, rebel love! I must be calm—Come hither;

Beware, rash maid, of such imprudent steps,
They lead to guilt. What wild pernicious errors
May n't the heart yield to if not greatly watch'd!

Pal. In loving Zaphna sure it cannot err;
There's nothing wild, nothing pernicious—

Mab. How!

This theme delights you——

Pal. I must own it does.

Yes, my great master, for I still have thought
That Heav'n itself approv'd of my affection,
And gave a sanction to our mutual ardours.
Can what was virtue once be now a crime?
Can I be guilty——

Mab. Yes—towards me you are——

You, nurs'd from infancy beneath my eye,
Child of my care and pupil of my faith,
You, whom my partial fondness still distinguish'd
From all the captive youths that grac'd my triumphs,
And you who now without my leave permit
A slave to bear thee from my sight for ever.

Pal. No, we both live, nay more, would die for thee:
And oh my Lord! if all that earth can offer
Of grandeur, opulence, or pleasure, e'er
Shall make me deaf to gratitude's demands,
May Zaphna's self be evidence against me,
And plead for double vengeance on my treachery.

Mab. apart.] Zaphna again! Furies! I shall relapse!
And make her witness of my weakness.

Pal. Sir!

What sudden start of passion arms that eye?

Mab. Oh nothing: pray retire a while: take courage;
I'm not at all displeas'd: 't was but to sound
The depth of thy young heart. I praise thy choice;
Trust then thy dearest int'rest to my bosom;
But know your fate depends on your obedience.
If I have been a guardian to your youth,
If all my lavish bounties past weigh aught,
Deserve the future blessings which await you.
Howe'er the voice of Heav'n dispose of Zaphna,
Confirm him in the path where duty leads,
That he may keep his vow and merit thee.

Pal. Distrust him not my sov'reign; noble Zaphna
Disdains to lag in love or glory's course.

Mah. Enough of words—

Pal. As boldly I've avow'd

The love I bear that hero at your feet,
I'll now to him, and fire his gen'rous breast
To prove the duty he has sworn to thee. [*Exit Palmira.*

Mah. alone.] Confusion! must I, spite o' me, be made
The confidant of her incestuous passion?
What could I say? such sweet simplicity
Lur'd down my rage, and innocently wing'd
The arrow thro' my heart. And shall I bear this?
Be made the sport of curst Alcanor's house?
Check'd in my rapid progress by the fire,
Supplanted in my love by this rash boy,
And made a gentle pander to the daughter?
Perdition on the whole detested race!

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Now, Mahomet, 's the time to seize on Mecca,
Crush this Alcanor, and enjoy Palmira.
This night the old enthusiast offers incense
To his vain gods in sacred Caabo:
Zaphna, who flames with zeal for Heav'n and thee,
May be won o'er to seize that lucky moment.

Mah. He shall; it must be so; he's born to act
The glorious crime; and let him be at once
The instrument and victim of the murder.
My law, my love, my vengeance, my own safety,
Have doom'd it so—But, Mirvan, dost thou think
His youthful courage, nurs'd in superstition,
Can e'er be work'd—

Mir. I tell thee, Mahomet,
He's tutor'd to accomplish thy design.
Palmira too, who thinks thy will is Heav'n's,
Will nerve his arm to execute thy pleasure.
Love and enthusiasm blind her youth:
They're still most zealous who're most ignorant.

Mah. Didst thou engage him by a solemn vow?

Mir. I did, with all th' enthusiastick pomp
Thy law enjoins; then gave him, as from thee,
A consecrated sword to act thy will.
Oh, he is burning with religious fury!

Mab. But hold, he comes—

Enter ZAPHNA.

Child of that awful and tremendous pow'r
Whose laws I publish, whose behests proclaim,
Listen whilst I unfold his sacred will:

'Tis thine to vindicate his ways to man,

'Tis thine his injur'd worship to avenge.

Zaph. Thou Lord of nations, delegate of Heav'n,
Sent to shed day o'er the benighted world,
Oh say in what can Zaphna prove his duty!
Instruct me how a frail earthprison'd mortal
Can or avenge or vindicate a god.

Mab. By thy weak arm he deigns to prove his cause,
And lanch his vengeance on blaspheming rebels.

Zaph. What glorious action, what illustrious danger,
Does that Supreme, whose image thou, demand?
Place me, oh place me! in the front of battle
'Gainst odds innumerable; try me there;
Or if a single combat claim my might
'The stoutest Arab may step forth and see
If Zaphna fail to greet him as he ought.

Mab. Oh, greatly said, my son; 't is inspiration!
But heed me: 'tis not by a glaring act
Of human valour Heav'n has will'd to prove thee;
This infidels themselves may boast when led
By ostentation, rage, or brutelike rashness.
To do whate'er Heav'n gives in sacred charge,
Nor dare to sound its fathomless decrees,
This and this only's meritorious zeal.
Attend, adore, obey; thou shalt be arm'd
By Death's remorseless angel which awaits me.

Zaph. Speak out, pronounce; what victim must I offer?
What tyrant sacrifice? whose blood requir'st thou?

Mab. The blood of a detested infidel,
A murderer, a foe to Heav'n and me,
A wretch who slew my child, blasphemes my god,
And like a huge Colossus bears a world
Of impious opposition to my faith:
The blood of curst Alcanor.

Zaph. I!—Alcanor!

Mab. What! dost thou hesitate! Rash youth, beware;

He that deliberates is sacrilegious.
 Far, far from me be those audacious mortals
 Who for themselves would impiously judge,
 Or see with their own eyes; who dares to think
 Was never born a proselyte for me.
 Know who I am; know on this very spot
 I've charg'd thee with the just decree of Heav'n,
 And when that Heav'n requires of thee no more
 Than the bare off'ring of its deadliest foe,
 Nay, thy foe too and mine, why dost thou balance,
 As thy own father were the victim claim'd!
 Go, vile idolater! false Musselman!
 Go seek another master, a new faith.

Zaph. Oh Mahomet!

Mah. Just when the prize is ready,
 When fair Palmira's destin'd to thy arms——
 But what's Palmira? or what's heav'n to thee,
 Thou poor weak rebel to thy faith and love!
 Go serve and cringe to our detested foe.

Zaph. Oh pardon, Mahomet! methinks I hear
 The oracle of Heav'n——It shall be done.

Mah. Obey then, strike, and for his impious blood
 Palmira's charms and Paradise be thine. [eyes
 "Apart to Mirvan.] Mirvan attend him close, and let thy
 "Be fix'd on ev'ry movement of his soul." [Exeunt.

Zaph. alone.] Soft, let me think——This duty wears the
 face

Of something more than monstrous——Pardon, Heav'n!
 To sacrifice an innocent old man,
 Weigh'd down with age, unsuccour'd and unarm'd!
 When I am hostage for his safety too!——
 No matter, Heav'n has chose me for the duty;
 My vow is past and must be straight fulfill'd.
 Ye stern relentless ministers of wrath,
 Spirits of vengeance! by whose ruthless hands
 The haughty tyrants of the earth have bled,
 Come to my succour, to my flaming zeal
 Join your determin'd courage;
 And thou, angel
 Of Mahomet, exterminating angel!
 That mow'st down nations to prepare his passage,
 Support my salt'ring will, harden my heart,

Left nature, pity, plead Alcanor's cause,
And wrest the dagger from me.
Hah! who comes here?

Enter ALCANOR.

Alc. Whence, Zaphna, that deep gloom,
That like a blasting mildew on the ear
Of promis'd harvest blackens o'er thy visage?
Grieve not that here, thro' form, thou art confin'd;
I hold thee not as hostage but as friend,
And make thy safety partner with my own.

Zaph. apart.] And make my safety partner with thy own!

Alc. The bloody carnage, by this truce suspended
For a few moments, like a torrent check'd
In its full flow, will with redoubled strength
Bear all before it——

In this impending scene of publick horror
Be then, dear youth! these mansions thy asylum:
I'll be thy hostage now, and with my life
Will answer that no mischief shall befall thee.
I know not why, but thou art precious to me.

Zaph. Heav'n, duty, gratitude, humanity! [*Apart.*]
What didst thou say Alcanor? Didst thou say
That thy own roof should shield me from the tempest?
That thy own life stood hostage for my safety?

Alc. Why thus amaz'd at my compassion for thee?
I am a man myself, and that's enough
To make me feel the woes of other men,
And labour to redress 'em——

Zaph. apart.] What melody these accents make!
And whilst my own religion spurs to murder
His precepts of humanity prevail.

[*To Alcanor.*] Can then a foe to Mahomet's sacred law
Be virtue's friend?

Alc. Thou know'st but little, Zaphna,
If thou dost think true virtue is confin'd
To climes or systems; no, it flows spontaneous,
Like life's warm stream thro'out the whole creation,
And beats the pulse of ev'ry healthful heart.
How canst thou, Zaphna, worship for thy god
A being claiming cruelty and murders
From his adorers? Such is thy master's god——

Zaph. apart.] Oh, my relenting soul! thou 'rt almost
thaw'd

From thy resolve—I pray you Sir no more.
Peace, reason, peace!

Alc. apart.] The more I view him, talk with him, observe
His understanding tow'ring 'bove his age,
His candour, which ev'n bigotry can't smother,
The more my breast takes int'rest in his welfare. [ask thee
[*To Zaphna.*] Zaphna, come near—I oft' have thought to
To whom thou ow'st thy birth, whose gen'rous blood
Swells thy young veins and mantles at thy heart.

Zaph. That dwells in darkness; no one friendly beam
E'er gave me glimpse from whom I am descended.
The camp of godlike Mahomet has been
My cradle and my country, whilst of all
His captive infants no one more has shar'd
The sunshine of his clemency and care.

Alc. I do not blame thy gratitude young man;
But why was Mahomet thy benefactor?
Why was not I? I envy him that glory.
Why then this impious man has been a father
Alike to thee and to the fair Palmira.

Zaph. Oh!

Alc. What's the cause, my Zaphna, of that sigh,
And all that language of a smother'd anguish?
Why didst thou snatch away thy cordial eye
That shone on me before?

Zaph. apart.] Oh my torn heart!
Palmira's name revives the racking thought
Of my near blunted purpose.

Alc. Come, my friend;
The floodgates of destruction soon thrown ope
Will pour in ruin on that curse of nations.
If I can save but thee and fair Palmira
From this o'erflowing tide let all the rest
Of his abandon'd minions be the victims
For your deliverance—I must save your blood.

Zaph. apart.] Just Heav'n! and is't not I must shed his

Alc. Nay, tremble if thou dar'st to hesitate. [blood?
Follow me straight.

Enter PHARON.

Pha. Alcanor, read that letter,
Put in my hands this moment by an Arab

With utmost stealth, and air bespeaking somewhat
Of high importance.

Alc. reads.] Whence is this?—Hercides!
Cautious, my eyes! be sure you're not mistaken
In what you here insinuate. Gracious Heav'n!
Will then thy Providence at length o'errule
My wayward fate, and by one matchless blessing
Sweeten the suff'rings of a threescore years!

[*After looking for some time earnestly at Zaphna.*

Follow me.

Zaph. Thee!—But Mahomet—

Alc. Thy life

And all its future bliss dwells on this moment.

Follow I say.

[*Exeunt Alcanor and Pharon.*

*Enter MIRVAN and his Attendants hastily on the other side of
the Stage.*

Mir. to Zaphna.] Traitor, turn back; what means
This conference with the foe? To Mahomet
Away this instant; he commands thy presence.

Zaph. apart.] Where am I? Heav'n's! how shall I now
How act! A precipice on ev'ry side [resolve!
"Awaits me," and the first least step's perdition.

Mir. Young man, our prophet brooks not such delay;
Go, stop the bolt that's ready to be lanch'd
On thy rebellious head.

Zaph. Yes, and renounce
This horrid vow, that's poison to my soul.

[*Exit with Mirvan, &c.*

Reenter ALCANOR and PHARON.

Alc. Where is this Zaphna?—But he flies me still:
In vain I call in all the soft'ning arts
Of pity, love, and friendship, to engage him:
His breast is fear'd by that impostor's precepts
'Gainst all who bid defiance to his laws.
But, Pharon, didst thou mark the baneful gloom,
The somewhat like reluctance, rage, and pity,
That blended sat upon his pensive brow?

Pha. I did; there's something at his heart—

Alc. There is——

Would I could fathom it! This letter, Pharon,
His aspect, age, the transport that I taste
When he is near me, the anxiety

His absence gives, do too much violence
 To my distracted sense. Hercides here
 Desires to see me; 't was his barbarous hands
 That robb'd me of my children; they are living,
 He tells me, under Mahomet's protection,
 And he has something to unfold on which
 Their destiny and mine depends. This Zaphna
 And young Palmira, vassals of that tyrant,
 Are ignorant from whom they are descended.
 Imagination's pregnant with the thought.
 My wishes mock me. Sinking with my grief
 I blindly catch at ev'ry flatt'ring error,
 And supplicate Deception's self for succour.

Pha. Hope, but yet fear, Alcanor: think, my chief,
 How many infants from their parents torn,
 Ere conscious whose they are, attend that tyrant,
 Drink in his dictates, place their being in him,
 And deem him an infallible dispenser
 Of Heav'n's decisions——

Alc. Well, no matter, Pharon:
 At noon of night conduct Hercides hither;
 Thy master in th' adjoining fane once more
 Will importune the gods with pray'rs and incense
 That he may save his friends and see his children.

Pha. Thou shalt not find thy Pharon slack in aught
 That tends to thy deliverance from this anguish. [*Ex. Pha.*

Alc. Just Heav'n! if by erroneous thought or act
 I have drawn down your fierce displeasure on me
 Point me to right, I'll onward to its goal
 With double energy, will expiate all,
 That in the days of ignorance might offend;
 Only restore my children to my care,
 Give to my craving arms my hapless children,
 That I may form them, turn 'em back from wrong,
 Weed their young minds of those pernicious errors
 The arch-impostor has implanted in 'em,
 Train 'em in virtue's school, and lead them on
 To deeds of glorious and immortal honour.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE, *Mahomet's apartment.**MAHOMET alone.*

AMBITION knows not conscience——
 Well, this Zaphna
 Is fix'd at length—I lesson'd him so home,
 Dealt to his young enthusiastick soul
 Such promises and threats——

Enter MIRVAN.

Mirvan, what news?

Mir. Oh, Mahomet, I fear the nice-wov'n web
 Of our design's unravell'd. Ere thy spirit
 Had reinflam'd young Zaphna with the thirst
 Of old Alcanor's blood he had reveal'd
 The dreadful purpose to Hercides——

Mah. Hah!

Mir. Hercides loves the youth, and Zaphna still
 Has held him as a father.

Mah. That I like not.

What does Hercides say? thinks he with us?

Mir. Oh no; he trembles at the very thought
 Of this dread scene, compassionates Alcanor,
 And——

Mah. He's but a half friend then, and a half friend
 Is not a span from traitor. Mirvan, Mirvan,
 A dangerous witness must be some way dealt with:
 Am I obey'd?

Mir. 'Tis done.*Mah.* Then for the rest——

Or e'er the harbinger of morrow's dawn
 Gleam in the east, Alcanor, thou must set,
 Or Mahomet and all his hopes must perish:
 That's the first step then—Zaphna, next for thee.
 Soon as thy hands have dealt the midnight mischief
 In thy own blood the secret must be drown'd.
 Thus quit of son and father (those curst rivals
 Who elbow me at once in love and grandeur)
 Both Mecca and Palmira shall be mine.
 Oh tow'ring prospect! how it fills the eye
 Of my aspiring and enamour'd soul!

Night! put on double fable, that no star
May be a spy on those dark deeds——Well, Mirvan,
Shall we accomplish this?

Mir. We shall, my chief.

Mab. What tho' I seize his life from whom she sprung?
He's not her father as she knows it not.
Trust me those partial ties of blood and kindred
Are but th' illusive taints of education:
What we call nature is mere habit Mirvan;
That habit's on our side; for the whole study
Of this young creature's life has been obedience,
To think, believe, and act, as pleasur'd me.
But hold, the hour on which our fortune hangs
Is now at hand. While Zaphna seeks the temple
Let us look round us, see that not a wheel
Lag in the vast machine we have at work:
It is success that consecrates our actions:
The vanquish'd rebel as a rebel dies,
The victor-rebel plumes him on a throne. [Exeunt.

SCENE changes to the temple.

Enter ZAPHNA with a drawn sword in his hand.

Zaph. Well then, it must be so; I must discharge
This cruel duty—Mahomet enjoins it,
And Heav'n thro' him demands it of my hands.
Horrid, tho' sacred act!—my soul shrinks back,
And wont admit conviction—Ay, but Heav'n!
Heav'n's call I must obey—Oh dire obedience!
What dost thou cost me! my humanity!
Why, duty, art thou thus at war with nature?

Enter PALMIRA.

Thou here Palmira! oh! what fatal transport
Leads thee to this sad place, these dark abodes,
Sacred to death? Thou hast no bus'ness here.

Pal. Oh, Zaphna, fear and love have been my guides.
What horrid sacrifice is this enjoin'd thee?
What victim does the god of Mahomet
Claim from thy tender hand?

Zaph. Oh, my guardian angel,
Speak; resolve me;
How can assassination be a virtue?
How can the gracious parent of mankind
Delight in mankind's sufferings? May n't this prophet,

This great announcer of his heav'nly will,
Mistake it once?

Pal. Oh, tremble to examine.

He sees our hearts—To doubt is to blaspheme.

Zaph. Be steady then, my soul, firm to thy purpose,
And let religion steel thee against pity.

Come forth thou foe to Mahomet and Heav'n,
And meet the doom thy rebel faith deserves;
Come forth Alcanor.

Pal. Who, Alcanor!

Zaph. Yes.

Pal. The good Alcanor?

Zaph. "Why d'ye call him good?
Curse on his Pagan virtues! he must die;
So Mahomet commands: and yet methinks
Some other deity arrests my arm,
And whispers to my heart—Zaphna, forbear!

Pal. Distracting state!

Zaph. Alas! my dear Palmira,
I'm weak, and shudder at this bloody bus'ness.
Help me, oh help, Palmira! I am torn,
Distracted with this conflict.

Zeal, horror, love, and pity, seize my breast,
And drag it diff'rent ways. Alas! Palmira,
You see me tossing on a sea of passions;
'Tis thine, my angel, to appease this tempest,
Fix my distracted will, and teach me—

Pal.—What!

What can I teach thee in this strife of passions?
Oh Zaphna! I revere our holy prophet,
Think all his laws are register'd in heav'n,
And ev'ry mandate minted in the skies.

Zaph. But then to break thro' hospitality,
And murder him by whom we are protected!

Pal. Oh, poor Alcanor! gen'rous good Alcanor!
My heart bleeds for thee.

Zaph. Know then unless I act this horrid scene,
Unless I plunge this dagger in the breast
Of that old man, I must—I must—

Pal. What—

Zaph. Must Palmira—

(Oh agonizing thought!) lose thee for ever.

Pal. Am I the price of good Alcanor's blood?

Zaph. So Mahomet ordains.

Pal. Horrible dowry!

Zaph. Thou know'st the curse our prophet has denounc'd
Of endless tortures on the disobedient?

Thou know'st with what an oath I've bound myself
To vindicate his laws, extirpate all
That dare oppose his progress: say then, fair one,
Thou tutors divine, instruct me how,
How to obey my chief, perform my oath,
Yet list to mercy's call.

Pal. This rends my heart.

Zaph. How to avoid being banish'd thee for ever.

Pal. Oh, save me from that thought! must that e'er be?

Zaph. It must not: thou hast now pronounc'd his doom.

Pal. What doom?—Have I!

Zaph. Yes, thou hast seal'd his death.

Pal. I seal his death!—Did I?

Zaph. 'Twas Heav'n spoke by thee; thou'rt its oracle,
And I'll fulfil its laws. This is the hour
In which he pays at the adjoining altar
Black rites to his imaginary gods.
Follow me not Palmira.

Pal. I must follow;

I will not, dare not, leave thee.

Zaph. Gentle maid,

I beg thee fly these walls; thou canst not bear
This horrid scene—Oh, these are dreadful moments
Begone—quick—this way—

Pal. No, I follow thee,

Retread thy ev'ry footstep, tho' they lead
To the dark gulf of death.

Zaph. Thou matchless maid!—to the dire trial then.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE. draws, and discovers the inner part of the temple with a
pagan altar and images, Alcanor addressing himself to the idols.

Alc. Eternal Pow'rs! that deign to bless these mansions,
Protectors of the sons of Ishmael,
Crush, crush this blasphemous invader's force,
And turn him back with shame. If pow'r be your's
Oh! shield your injur'd votaries, and lay
Oppression bleeding at your altar's foot.

Enter ZAPHNA and PALMIRA.

Pal. entering.] Act not this bloody deed: oh save him,
save him.

Zaph. Save him, and lose both Paradise and thee!

Pal. Hah, yon' he stands—Oh! Zaphna, all my blood
is frozen at the sight.

Alc. 'Tis in your own behalf that I implore
The terrors of your might; swift, swiftly
Pour vengeance on this vile apostate's head,
Who dares profanely wrest your thunder from you,
And lodge it with an unknown fancy'd god.

Zaph. Hear how the wretch blasphemes! So, now—

Pal. Hold Zaphna!

Zaph. Let me go—

Pal. I cannot—cannot.

Alc. But if, for reasons which dimfighited mortals
Can't look into, you'll crown this daring rebel
With royalty and priesthood, take my life:
And if, ye gracious Pow'rs! you 'ave ought of bliss
In store for me, at my last hour permit me
To see my children, pour my blessing on them,
Expire in their dear arms, and let them close
These eyes, which then would wish no afterfight.

Pal. His children, did he say?

Zaph. I think he did——

Alc. For this I'll at your altar pay my vows,
And make it smoke with incense. [*Retires behind the altar*]

Zaph. "Now's the time;" [*Drawing his sword*]
Insulting Heav'n he flies to stones for refuge:
Now let me strike.

Pal. Stay but one moment Zaphna.

Zaph. It must not be—unhand me.

Pal. What to do!

Zaph. To serve my God and king, and merit thee.
[*Breaking from Palmira, and going towards the altar, he starts
and stops short.*]

Ha! what are ye, ye terrifying shades?

What means this lake of blood that lies before me?

Pal. Oh Zaphna! let us fly these horrid roofs.

Zaph. No, no—Go on ye ministers of Death;
Lead me the way: I'll follow ye.

Pal. Stay, Zaphna;

Heap no more horrors on me; I'm expiring
Beneath the load.

Zaph. Be hush'd—the altar trembles!
What means that omen! does it spur to murder,
Or would it rein me back? No, 't is the voice
Of Heav'n itself that chides my ling'ring hand.
Now send up thither all thy vows Palmira,
Whilst I obey its will and give the stroke.

[*Goes out behind the altar after Alcanor.*]

Pal. What vows? will Heav'n receive a murd'rer's vows?
For sure I'm such whilst I prevent not murder.
Why beats my heart thus? what soft voice is this
That's waken'd in my soul, and preaches mercy?
If Heav'n demands his life dare I oppose?
Is it my place to judge?—Hah! that dire groan
Proclaims the bloody bus'ness is about.
Zaphna! oh Zaphna!

Recenter ZAPHNA.

Zaph. Ha! where 'am I?
Who calls me? where's Palmira? she's not here:
What fiend has snatch'd her from me?

Pal. Heav'ns! he raves!
Dost thou not know me Zaphna! her who lives
For thee alone?—Why dost thou gaze thus on me?

Zaph. Where are we?

Pal. Hast thou then discharg'd
The horrid duty?

Zaph. What dost thou say?

Pal. Alcanor——

Zaph. Alcanor! what Alcanor?

Pal. Gracious Heav'n,

Look down upon him!

Let's begone my Zaphna,

Let's fly this place.

Zaph. Oh, whither fly! to whom?

D'ye see these hands? who will receive these hands?

Pal. Oh, come, and let me wash them with my tears!

Zaph. Who art thou? let me lean on thee—I find

My pow'rs returning. Is it thou Palmira?

Where have I been? what have I done?

Pal. I know not:

Think on't no more.

Zaph. But I must think and talk on't too Palmira.

I seiz'd the victim by his hoary locks—

(Thou, Heav'n, didst will it)

Then, shuddering with horror, bury'd straight

'The poignard in his breast. I had redoubled

The bloody plunge—(what cannot zeal persuade!)

But that the venerable fire pour'd forth

So piteous a groan ! look'd fo, Palmira——

And with a feeble voice cry'd, Is it Zaphna?

I could no more. Oh! hadst thou seen, my love,

The fell, fell dagger in his bosom, view'd

His dying face, where fat such dignity,

Cloth'd with compassion tow'rd his base assassin,

[*Throwing himself on the ground.*

The dire remembrance weighs me to the earth—

Here let me die——

Pal. Rise, my lov'd Zaphna! rise,

And let us fly to Mahomet for protection:

If we are found in these abodes of slaughter

'Tortures and death attend us: let us fly.

Zaph. starting up.] I did fly at that blasting fight **Palмира**,

When drawing out the fatal steel he cast

Such tender looks! I fled—the fatal steel.

The voice, the tender looks, the bleeding victim

Blessing his murderer, I could not fly:

No, they clung to me, riv'd my throbbing heart.

And set my brain on fire. What have we done!

Pal. Hark! what's that noise? I tremble for thy life.

Oh! in the name of love, by all the ties,

Those sacred ties that bind thee mine for ever.

I do conjure thee follow me.

[*Alcanor comes from behind the altar, leaning against it, with the bloody sword in his hand.*]

Zaph. Hah! look Palmira, see what object's that

Which bears upon my tortur'd fight? Is't he?

Or is't his bloody manes come to haunt us?

Pal. 'Tis he himself, poor wretch ! struggling with death,

And feebly crawling tow'rd's us. Let me fly

And yield what help I can: let me support thee.

Thou much-lamented, injur'd, good old man!

Zaph. Why don't I move? my feet are rooted here;

And all my frame is struck and wither'd up

As with a lightning's blast,

Alc. My gentle maid,

Wilt thou support me?

Weep not, my Palmira.

Pal. I could weep tears of blood if that would serve thee.

Alc. sitting down.] Zaphna, come hither; thou hast ta'en my life,

For what offence or what one thought towards thee
That anger or malevolence gave birth,
Heav'n knows I am unconscious. Do not look so:
I see thou dost relent.

Enter PHARON hastily.

Pal. starting back.] Hah! 't is too late then.

Alc. Would I could see Hercides?—Pharon, lo
Thy martyr'd friend by his distemper'd hand
Is now expiring.

Pha. Dire unnatural crime!
Oh, wretched parricide!---behold thy father.

[*Pointing to Alc.*

Zaph. My father!

Pal. Father! hah!

Alc. Myfterious Heav'n!

Pha. Hercides dying by the hand of Mirvan,
Who slew him lest he should betray the secret,
Saw me approach, and in the pangs of death
Cry'd, Fly and save Alcanor; wrest the sword
From Zaphna's hands if 't is not yet too late,
That's destin'd for his death; then let him know
That Zaphna and Palmira are his children.

Pal. That Zaphna and Palmira are his children!
Dost hear that Zaphna!

Zaph. 'Tis enough my Fate!
Canst thou ought more!

Alc. Oh, nature! oh, my children!
By what vile instigations wert thou driv'n,
Unhappy Zaphna! to this bloody action!

Zaph. falling at his father's feet.] Oh I cannot speak;
Restore me, Sir, restore that damned weapon,
That I for once may make it, as I ought,
An instrument of justice.

Pal. kneeling.] Oh, my father,
Strike here; the crime was mine; 't was I alone
That work'd his will to this unnat'ral deed:

Upon these terms alone he cou'd be mine,
And incest was the price of parricide.

Zaph. Strike your assassins——

Alc. I embrace my children,
And joy to see them, tho' my life's the forfeit.
Rise, children, rise and live; live to revenge
Your father's death—But in the name of Nature,
By the remains of this paternal blood
That's oozing from my wound, raise not your hands
'Gainst your own being. Zaphna, wouldst thou do me
A second deadlier mischief?
Selfslaughter can't atone for parricide.

Zaph. Then I will live,
Live to some purpose: this is glorious suffering.

Alc. Thy undetermin'd arm ha'n't quite fulfill'd
Its bigot purpose; I hope to live to animate
Our friends 'gainst this impostor; lead 'em, Zaphna,
To root out a rapacious baneful crew,
Whose zeal is phrenzy, whose religion murder.

Zaph. Swift, swift, ye hours! and light me to revenge!
Come, thou infernal weapon, [*Snatches the bloody sword.*]
I'll wash off thy foul stain with the heart's blood
Of that malignant sanctify'd assassin.

[*As Zaphna is going off Mirvan and his followers enter and stop him.*]

Mir. Seize Zaphna,
And load the trait'rous murderer with chains:
Help you the good Alcanor—Hapless man!
Our prophet in a vision learnt to-night
The mournful tale of thy untimely end,
And sent me straight to seize the vile assassin,
That he might wrake severest justice on him:
Mahomet comes to vindicate the laws,
Not suffer with impunity their breach.

Alc. Heav'ns! what accumulated crimes are here!

Zaph. Where's the monster? bear me instant to him,
That I may blast him with my eye, may curse him
With my last hesitating voice.

Pal. Thou traitor,
Did not thy own death-doing tongue enjoin
This horrid deed?

Mir. Not mine by Heav'n!

Zaph. Not thine!

Mir. No, by our prophet and his holy faith,
Of all the thoughts ere harbour'd in this breast
It ne'er had such a monster for its tenant.

Zaph. Most accomplish'd villain!

Mirvan, look at me—dar'st thou—

Mir. Off with him, [To the Soldiers.]

And see him well secur'd, till Mahomet
Demands him of you.

Pal. Villain, hold! [Laying hold of Zaphna.]

Mir. Away.

Zaph. Just, just reward of my credulity!

Pal. Let me go with him; I will share thy fate
Unhappy Zaphna, for I share thy guilt.

But then— [Looking back at Alcanor.]

Mir. No more—you must to Mahomet:

Obeys without reluctance: our great prophet,
In pity to your tender frame and years,
Will take you under his divine protection.

Pal. apart.] Oh death! deliver me from such protection!

Mir. If you would ought to save the destin'd Zaphna
Follow me to the prophet; you may move him
To mitigate his doom—Away.

[To the Soldiers who hold Zaphna.]

You this way.

[To Palmira.]

Zaph. Pardon!

Pal. Oh, pardon!

[They are led off by degrees, looking alternately at their father
and each other.]

Alc. Oh, insupportable!

Both from me torn then when I wanted most
Their consolation.

[About.]

Pha. Hark!

The citizens are rous'd, and all in arms
Rush on to your defence.

Alc. Pharon, support me

Some moments longer—Help, conduct me towards 'em;
Bare this wound to 'em; let that speak the cause,
The treach'rous cause, for words begin to fail me;
Then if in death I can but serve my country,
Save my poor children from this tiger's gripe,
And give a second life to that lov'd pair

By whose misguided zeal I lose my own;
 What patriot or parent but would wish
 In so divine a cause to fall a martyr!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

Enter MAHOMET and MIRVAN.

MAHOMET.

WRONG will be ever nurs'd and fed with blood—
 So this boybigot held his pious purpose?

Mir. Devoutly.

Mab. What a reasonless machine
 Can superstition make the reas'ner man!
 Alcanor lies there on his bed of earth?

Mir. This moment he expir'd, and Mecca's youth
 In vain lament their chief. To the mad crowd
 That gather'd round good Ali and myself
 (Full of thy dauntless heav'nly-seeming spirit)
 Disclaim'd the deed, and pointed out the arm
 Of righteous Heav'n that strikes for Mahomet—
 Think ye, we cry'd, (with eyes and hands uprear'd)
 Think ye our holy prophet would consent
 To such a crime, whose foulness casts a blot
 On right of nations, nature, and our faith?
 Oh, rather think he will revenge his death,
 And root his murd'rer from the burden'd earth!
 Then struck our breasts, and wept the good old man,
 And only wish he'd dy'd among the faithful,
 And slept with Ibrahim.

Mab. Excellent Mirvan!

Mir. We then both at large
 Descanted on thy clemency and bounty:
 On that the silent and desponding crowd,
 Broke out in murmurs, complaints, and last in shouts,
 And each mechanick grew a Mussulman.

Mab. Oh, worthy to deceive and awe the world,
 Second to Mahomet! let me embrace thee—
 But say, is not our army at their gates
 To back our clemency?

Mir. Omar commands

Their nightly march thro' unsuspected paths,
And with the morn appears.

Mab. At sight of them

The weak remaining billows of this storm
Will lash themselves to peace—But where is Zaphna?

Mir. Safe in a dungeon, where he dies apace,
Unconscious of his fate; for well thou know'st
Ere at the altar's foot he flew his fire
In his own veins he bore his guilt's reward,
A deadly draught of poison.

Mab. I would be kind, and let him die deceiv'd,
Nor know that parent blood defiles his soul.

Mir. He cannot know it: if the grave be silent
I'm sure Hercides is——

Mab. Unhappy Zaphna!

Something like pity checks me for thy death.
But why—I must not think that way—shall Mahomet
Give a new Paradise to all mankind,
And let remorse of conscience be the hell
Of his own breast! My safety claim'd his life,
And all the heav'n of fair Palmira's charms
Shall be my great reward.

Mir. My noble Lord,
Palmira is at hand, and waits your pleasure.

Mab. Athand! How, Mirvan, couldst thou let me talk
On themes of guilt when that pure angel's near?

Mir. The weeping fair, led on by flatt'ring hope
Of Zaphna's life, attends your sacred will:
A silent pale dejection throws her cheeks,
And like the lily in a morning show'r
She droops her head and locks up all her sweets.

Mab. Say Mahomet awaits, and then
Assemble all our chiefs, and on this platform
Let them attend me straight. [Exit Mirvan.

Enter PALMIRA with Attendants.

Pal. apart.] Where have they led me?
Methinks each step I take the mangled corpse
Of my dear father (by poor Zaphna mangled)
Lies in my way, and all I see is blood—— [Starting.
'Tis the Impostor's self!—Burst, heart, in silence.

Mab. Maid, lay aside this dread. Palmira's fate
And that of Mecca by my will is fix'd.

This great event, that fills thy soul with horror,
Is mystery to all but Heav'n and Mahomet.

Pal. Oh, ever righteous Heav'n! canst thou suffer
This sacrilegious hypocrite, this spoiler,
To steal thy terrors, and blaspheme thy name,
Nor doom him instant dead? [*Aside.*]

Mah. Child of my care,
At length from galling chains I've set thee free,
And made thee triumph in a just revenge;
Think then thou'rt dear to me, and Mahomet
Regards thee with a more than father's eye:
Then know (if thou'lt deserve the mighty boon)
An higher name, a nobler fate, awaits thee.

Pal. What would the tyrant?—

Mah. Raise thy thoughts to glory,
And sweep this Zaphna from thy memory,
With all that's past—Let that mean flame expire
Before the blaze of empire's radiant sun.
Thy grateful heart must answer to my bounties,
Follow my laws, and share in all my conquests.

Pal. What laws, what bounties, and what conquests,
Fraud is thy law, the tomb thy only bounty, [tyrant?]
Thy conquests fatal as infected air,
Dispeopling half the globe—See here, good Heav'n!
The venerable prophet I rever'd,
The king I serv'd, the god that I ador'd.

Mah. approaching her.] Whence this unwonted language, this wild frenzy?

Pal. Where is the spirit of my martyr'd father?
Where Zaphna's? where Palmira's innocence?
Blasted by thee, by thee, infernal monster—
Thou found'st us angels and hast made us fiends:
Give, give us back our lives, our fame, our virtue:
Thou canst not tyrant—yet thou seek'st my love,
Seek'st with Alcanor's blood his daughter's love,

Mah. apart.] Horror and death! the fatal secret's known.

Enter MIRVAN.

Mir. Oh, Mahomet, all's lost, thy glory tarnish'd,
And th' insatiate tomb ripe to devour us!
Hercides' parting breath divulg'd the secret.
The prison's forc'd, the city all in arms:

See where they bear aloft their murder'd chief,
Fell Zaphna in their front, death in his looks,
Rage all his strength. Spite of the deadly draught
He holds in life but to make sure of vengeance.

Mab. What dost thou here then? instant with our guards
Attempt to stem their progress till th' arrival
Of Omar with the troops.

Mir. I haste my Lord. [Exit Mirvan.]

Pal. Now, now, my hour's at hand.
Hear'st thou those shouts that rend the ambient air?
See'st thou those glancing fires that add new horrors
To the night's gloom? fresh from thy murd'ring poignard,
(For thine it was, tho' Zaphna gave the blow)
My father's spirit leads the vengeful shades
Of all the wretches whom thy sword has butcher'd:
I see them raise their unsubstantial arms
To snatch me from thy rage, or worse, thy love.
Shadows shall conquer in Palmira's cause.

Mab. apart.] What terrou'r's this that hangs upon her
I feel her virtue tho' I know her weakness. [accents?]

Pal. Thou ask'st my love, go seek it in the grave
Of good Alcanor—Talk'st of grateful minds,
Bid Zaphna plead for thee, and I may hear thee;
Till then thou art my scorn—May'st thou, like me,
Behold thy dearest blood spilt at thy feet,
Mecca, Medina, all our Asian world,
Join, join to drive th' Impostor from the earth,
Blush at his chains, and shake them off in vengeance!

Mab. apart.] Be still, my soul, nor let a woman's rage
Ruffle thy wonted calm—Spite of thy hate
Thou'rt lovely still, and charming ev'n in madness.

[A shout and noise of fighting.]

My fair, retire, nor let thy gentle soul
Shake with alarms; thou'rt my peculiar care:
I go to quell this trait'rous insurrection,
And will attend thee straight.

Pal. No, tyrant, no;
I'll join my brother, help to head our friends,
And urge them on. [A shout.]
Roll, roll your thunders heav'ns, and aid the storm,
Now hurl your lightning on the guilty head,
And plead the cause of injur'd innocence. [Exit Palmira.]

Enter ALI.

Mah. Whence, Ali, that surprise?

Ali. My royal chief,

The foe prevails—Thy troops, led on by Mirvan,
Are all cut off, and valiant Mirvan's self,
By Zaphna slain, lies weltring in his blood:
The guard that to our arms should ope the gates,
Struck with the common phrenzy, vow thy ruin,
And death and vengeance is the gen'ral cry.

Mah. Can Ali fear? then, Mahomet, be thyself.

Ali. See, thy few friends, whom wild despair hath arm'd,
(But arm'd in vain) are come to die beside thee.

Mah. Ye heartless traitors! Mahomet alone
Shall be his own defender, and your guard
Against the crowds of Mecca—Follow me.

*Enter ZAPHNA, PALMIRA, and PHARON, with citizens, and
the body of Alcanor on a bier.*

Ha!

Zaph. See, my friends, where the Impostor stands
With head erect, as if he knew not guilt,
As if no tongue spake from Alcanor's wound,
Nor call'd for vengeance on him.

Mah. Impious man!

Is't not enough to 'ave spilt thy parent-blood,
But with atrocious and blaspheming lips
Dar'st thou arraign the substitute of Heav'n?

Zaph. The substitute of Heav'n! so is the sword,
The pestilence, the famine; such art thou:
Such are the blessings Heav'n has sent to man
By thee its delegate; nay more, to me.
Oh, he took pains, Palmira, upon us,
Deluded us into such monstrous crimes
As Nature sicken'd at conception of!—
How couldst thou damn us thus?

Mah. Babblers, avaunt!

Zaph. Well thou upbraids me, for to parley with thee
Half brands me coward. Oh, revenge me, friends!
Revenge Alcanor's massacre; revenge
Palmira's wrongs, and crush the rancorous monster.

Mah. Hear me, ye slaves, born to obey my will.

Pal. Ah, hear him not! fraud dwells upon his tongue.

Zaph. Have at thee fiend—Ha! Heav'n,

[*Zaphna advancing reels, and reclines on his sword.*

What cloud is this

That thwarts upon my fight? my head grows dizzy,

My joints unloose: sure 'tis the stroke of Fate.

Mah. aside.] The poison works!—then triumph, Maho-

Zaph. Off, off, base lethargy.

[met!

Pal. Brother, dismay'd!

Hast thou no pow'r but in a guilty cause,

And only strength to be a parricide?

Zaph. Spare that reproach—Come on—It will not be.

[*Hangs down his sword, and reclines on Pharon.*

Some cruel pow'r unnerves my willing arm,

Blasts my resolves, and weighs me down to earth.

Mah. Such be the fate of all who brave our law.

Nature and Death have heard my voice, and now

Let Heav'n be judge 'twixt Zaphna and myself,

And instant blast the guilty of the two.

Pal. Brother! oh, Zaphna!

Zaph. Zaphna now no more.

[*Sinking down by Alcanor's body, and leaning on the bier,*

Pharon kneeling down with him and supporting him.

Down, down, good Pharon—Thou poor injur'd corse,

May I embrace thee? Wont thy pallid wound

Purple anew at the unnatural touch,

And ooze fresh calls for vengeance?

Pal. Oh, my brother!

Zaph. In vain's the guiltless meaning of my heart:

High Heav'n detests th' involuntary crime,

And dooms for parricide—Then tremble tyrant;

If the Supreme can punish error thus,

What new-invented tortures must await

Thy soul, grown leprous with such foul offences?

But soft—now fate and nature are at strife—

Sister, farewell! with transport should I quit

This toilsome, perilous, delusive stage,

But that I leave thee on't; leave thee, Palmira,

Expos'd to what is worse than fear can image,

That tyrant's mercy: but I know thee brave;

Know that thou'lt act a part—Look on her Heav'n,

Guide her, and—oh!

[*Dies.*

Pal. Think not, ye men of Mecca,

This death inflicted by the hand of Heav'n:

'Tis he—that viper—

Mab. Know, ye faithless wretches!
 'Tis mine to deal the bolts of angry Heav'n:
 Behold them there, and let the wretch who doubts
 Tremble at Zaphna's fate, and know that Mahomet
 Can read his thoughts, and doom him with a look.
 Go, then, and thank your pontiff and your prince
 For each day's sun he grants you to behold.
 Hence to your temples and appease my rage.

[*The people go off.*]

Pal. Ah, stay! my brother's murder'd by this tyrant:
 By poison not by piety he kills.

Mab. 'Tis done——Thus ever be our law receiv'd!

[*Apart.*]

Now fair Palmira——

Pal. Monster! is it thus
 Thou mak'st thyself a god, by added crimes,
 And murders justify'd by sacrilege?

Mab. Think, exquisite Palmira! for thy sake——

Pal. Thou'st been the murderer of all my race.
 See where Alcanor, see where Zaphna, lies:
 Do they not call for me too at thy hands?
 Oh that they did!——But I can read thy thoughts;
 Palmira's sav'd for something worse than death;
 'This to prevent——Zaphna, I follow thee.

[*Stabs herself with Zaphna's sword.*]

Mab. What hast thou done!

Pal. A deed of glory tyrant!
 Thou'st left no object worth Palmira's eye,
 And when I shut out light I shut out thee—— [Dies.]

Mab. Farewell dear victim of my boundless passion;
 The price of treachery, the reward of murder,
 Sink with thee to the earth——Oh, justice, justice!
 In vain are glory, worship, and dominion.
 All conqueror as I am I am a slave,
 And by the world ador'd dwell with the damn'd.
 My crimes have planted scorpions in my breast——
 Here, here, I feel them. 'Tis in vain to brave
 The host of terrors that invade my soul:
 I might deceive the world, myself I cannot.

Ali. Be calm a while my Lord; think what you are.

Mab. Ha! what am I? [Turning to the bodies]
 Ye breathless family,

Let your loud crying wounds say what I am.
 Oh! snatch me from that fight; quick, quick transport me
 To nature's loneliest mansion, where the sun
 Ne'er enter'd, where the sound of human tread
 Was never heard——But wherefore? still I there;
 There still, shall find myself—Ay, that's the hell——
 I'll none on't—— *[Drawing his sword.]*

Ali. Heav'ns! help, hold him! *[Ali, &c. disarm him.]*

Mab. Paltry dastards!

You fled the foe but can disarm your master.
 Angel of Death, whose pow'r I've long proclaim'd,
 Now aid me if thou canst; now if thou canst
 Draw the kind curtain of eternal night
 And shroud me from the horrors that beset me.

[Exeunt Mahomet, &c.]

Pha. Oh! what a curse is life when selfconviction.

Flings our offences hourly in our face,
 And turns existence torturer to itself!
 Here let the mad enthusiast turn his eyes,
 And see from bigotry what horrors rise,
 Here in the blackest colours let him read
 That zeal, by craft misled, may act a deed
 By which both innocence and virtue bleed.

[Exeunt.]

EPILOGUE.

ORIGINALLY SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK.

*LONG has the shameful licence of the age
With senseless ribaldry disgrac'd the stage;
So much indecencies have been in vogue
They pleaded custom in an Epilogue,
As if the force of reason was a yoke
So heavy—they must ease it with a joke;
Disarm the moral of its virtuous sway,
Or else the audience go displeas'd away.
How have I blush'd to see a tragick queen
With illtim'd mirth disgrace the wellwrote scene,
From all the sad solemnity of wo
Trip nimbly forth—to ridicule a beau,
Then, as the loosest airs she had been gleaning,
Coquette the fan, and leer a double meaning!
Shame on those arts that prostitute the bays!
Shame on the bard who this way hopes for praise!
The bold but honest Author of to-night
Disdains to please you if he please not right;
If in his wellmeant scene you chance to find
Aught to enoble or enlarge the mind,
If he has found the means with honest art
To fix the noblest wishes in the heart,
In softer accents to inform the fair
How bright they look when virtue drops the tear,
Enjoy with friendly welcome the repast,
And keep the heartfelt relish to the last.*

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
April 20. 1782.

THE END.





L. Roberts del.

Published for Bells British Theatre March 1778.

M^{rs} BARRY in the Character of ATHENAI
To my Verance till my death comes on,
Thall sad Eudisia thy dear loss bemoan.

THEODOSIUS; OR, THE FORCE OF LOVE.

A TRAGEDY. BY NATHANIEL LEE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book, by permission of the Managers,

BY MR. HOPKINS PROMPTER.

CHARACTERISTICS.

Thro' the whole course of all my harmless youth—Ev'n to this hour, I cannot call to mind—One wicked act which I have done to shame me. These with me retire—Devoted to the Pow'r whom we adore—I swear to leave the empire—To thee my sister I bequeath the world.

THEODOSIUS.

I hate to walk a lazy life away—Let us run the race which Fate has set before us—And look to the dark goal—'Tis said that from my youth I have been rash—Cholerick, and hot—What my thought has doom'd my hand shall seal—I will fall—As fair, as fearless, and as full resolv'd—As any Greek or Roman of them all. Dauntless I come.

VARANES.

I am not of their principle that take—A wrong; so far from bearing with a foe—I would strike first, like old Rome: I would forth—Elbow the neighbouring nations round about—Invade, enlarge my empire to the bounds—Of the too narrow universe—I despise your holy innovations—I'm for the Roman gods, for funeral piles—For mounting Eagles, and the busy'd greatness—Of our forefathers—Methinks my heated spirit—Could utter things worth hearing of my head—It matters not; for he who lies, like me—On the hard ground is sure to fall no further—If I think I shall go mad—I feel this big-swoln throbbing Roman spirit—Will burst unless I utter what I ought—What is life without my honour—Heap on me, Heaven, the hate of all mankind—Load me with malice, envy, detestation—Let me be horrid to all apprehension—And the world shun me, so I scape but scorn—Oh, temper, temper me, ye gracious Gods—Give me my hand forbearance, to my heart—Its constant loyalty.

MAR.

Say but the word, I'll fill the Hippodrome—With squadrons that shall make the Emperor tremble—We'll fire the court about his ears—Few words and rare friends; but, noble Marcias—If thou art not more than general—Ere dead of night say Lucius is a coward—May, I avow if your spirit dare—You shall be great as Cesar.

LUCIUS.

Speak at large—Make bare the wound, and I will pour in balm.
No, Athenais, let me see thee dead—Borne a pale corpse, and gently laid in earth—So I may say the 's chaste and dy'd a virgin—Rather than view thee with these wounded eyes—Seated upon the throne of Isidigerdes—The blast of common tongues, the nobles' scorn—Thy father's curse, that is, the prince's whore—Hold, my heart! and let that solid virtue—Which I so long ador'd still keep the reins.

LEONTINE.

What you command is terrible but sacred—And so atone for this too cruel duty—I'll follow you.

ARANTHES.

If e'er I marry—Marcian is my husband—Inspire me, woman!—That what my soul desires above the world—May seem impos'd and forc'd on my affections.

PULCHERIA.

Horrid supposition!—No Athenais! when the day beholds thee—So scandalously rais'd, wide cast thee down—The scorn of honour and the people's prey—No, Leontine, not to redeem—Thy aged head from the descending axe—Not tho' I saw thy trembling body rack'd—Thy wrinkles all about thee fill'd with blood—Would I for empire to the man I love—Be made the object of unlawful pleasure—My nice soul abhors the very sound—Athenais—Has something in her person and her virtue—Worth the regard of emperours themselves.

Oh! I swear—Had he prov'd true I would as easily—Have empty'd all my blood and dy'd to serve him—As now I shed these drops, or vent these sighs—To shew how well how per-

My I lov'd him—I rage, I burn, I bleed, I die, for love—I am distracted with this world's passion—Dear Varanes!—Oh! I could crush him to my heart—Whisper him, oh some

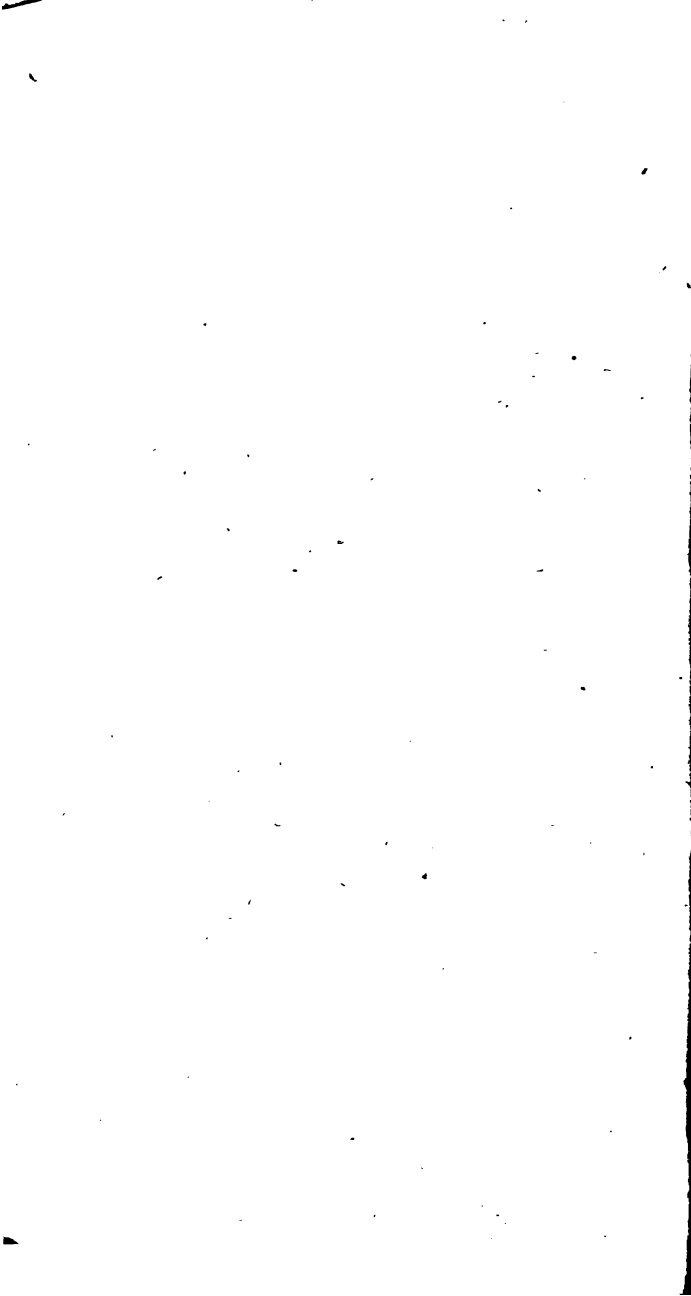
What I'm doing—Oh! my Varanes! tho' my birth's unequal—My virtue sure has recompens'd—And quite outgone example—Yes, my Varanes! till my death corse—Shall sad Eudofia thy dear loss bemoan—Here! oh here! on his cold bloody breast—Let me breathe my last—Thus by death I give thee all my love—And seal my soul and body ever thine.

ATHENAI'S.



EDINBURG:

At the Apollo Press, by THE MARTINS, for Well, LONDON, 1782.



TO HER GRACE THE
DUCHESS OF RICHMOND.

MADAM,

THE reputation that this Play received on the stage, some few errors excepted, was more than I could well hope from so censorious an age, from whom I ask but so much necessary praise as will serve once or twice a-year at most to gain their good company, and just keep me alive.

There is not now that mankind that was then,
When as the sun and man did seem to strive
(Joint tenants of the world) who should survive;
When if a slow-pac'd star had stol'n away
From the observer's marking he might stay
Two or three hundred years to see't again,
And then make up his observation plain.

Dr. Donne.

For it is impossible, in our limited time, (and I bring his opinion to back my own who is without comparison the best writer of the age) to present our judges a poem half so perfect as we could make it. I must acknowledge, Madam, with all humility, I ought to have taken more time and more pains in this Tragedy, because it is dedicated to your Grace, who being the best judge, (and therefore can when you please make us tremble) yet with exceeding mercy have pardoned the defects of Theodosius, and given it your entire approbation. My genius, Madam, was your favourite when the poet was unknown, and openly received your smiles before I had the honour to pay your Grace the most submissive gratitude for so illustrious and advantageous a protection. To let the world too know that you do not think it beneath you to be officiously good, even from the extreme heights to discern the lowest creatures, and give them all the noblest influence you can, you brought her Royal Highness just at the exigent time, whose single presence on the Poet's day is a subsistence for him all the year after. Ah Madam! if all the short-lived happiness that miserable poets can enjoy consists in commendation only, nay, if the most part are content with popular breath, and even for that are thankful, how shall I express myself to your Grace, who by a particular goodness and innate sweetness, merely for the sake of doing well, have thus raised me above myself? To have your Grace's favour is, in a word, to have the applause of the whole court, who are its noblest ornament; magnificent and eternal praise. Something there is in your mien so much above that we vulgarly call Charming, that to me it seems adorable, and your presence almost divine, whose dazzling and majestick form is a proper mansion for the most elevated soul. And let me tell the world, nay, sighing speak it to a barbarous age, (I cannot help calling it so when I think of Rome or Greece) your extraordinary love for heroick poetry is not the least argument to shew the greatness of your mind and fulness of perfection. To hear you speak with that infinite sweetness and cheerfulness of spirit that is natural to your Grace is, methinks, to hear our tutelar angels; it is to bemoan the present malicious times,

and remember the Golden Age; but to behold you too is to make prophets quite forget their heaven, and bind the poets with eternal rapture.

—————Her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought
That one might almost say her body thought.
You, for whose body God made better clay,
Or took souls' stuff, such as shall late decay,
Or such as need small change at the last day.

Dr. Donne. }

Ziphæes and Semandra were first your Grace's favourites; and though I ought not, Madam, to praise your wit by your judgment of my painting, yet I must say such characters every dauber cannot draw. It has been observed against me that I abound in ungoverned fancy; but I hope the world will pardon the fallies of youth: age, despondence, and dulness, come too fast of themselves. I discommend no man for keeping the beaten road; but I am sure the noble hunters that follow the game must leap hedges and ditches sometimes, and run at all, or never come into the fall of the quarry. My comfort is, I cannot be so ridiculous a creature to any man as I am to myself; for who should know the house so well as the good man at home, who when his neighbours come to see him still sets the best rooms to view, and if he be not a wild ass keeps the rubbish and lumber in some dark hole whither nobody comes but himself to mortify at melancholy hours? But how then, Madam, in this unsuitable condition, how shall I answer the infinite honours and obligations your Grace has laid upon me, your Grace, who is the most beautiful idea of love and glory, who to that divine composition have the noblest and best natured wit in the world? All I can promise, Madam, and am able to perform is, that your Grace shall never see a play of mine that shall give offence to modesty and virtue; and what I humbly offer to the world shall be of use at least, and I hope deserve imitation; which is or ought to be, I am sure, the design of all tragedies and comedies both ancient and modern. I should presume to promise myself too some success in things of this nature if your Grace (in whom the charms of beauty, wit, and goodness, seem reconciled) at a leisure hour would condescend to correct with your excellent judgment the errors of,

Madam,

your Grace's most humble,
most obedient,
and devoted servant,

NAT. LEE.

PROLOGUE.

*W*IT long oppress'd, and fill'd at last with rage,
 Thus in a sullen mood rebukes the age :
 What loads of fame do modern heroes bear
 For an inglorious, long, and lazy war,
 Who for some skirmish or a safe retreat
 (Not to be dragg'd to battle) are call'd great!
 But oh! what do ambitious statesmen gain
 Who into private chests all nations drain?
 What sums of gold they hoard is daily known
 To all mens' cost, and sometimes to their own.
 Your lawyer too, that like an O Yes bawls,
 That drowns the market bigglers in the stalls,
 That seem begot, conceiv'd, and born, in brawls,
 Yet thrives: he and his crowd get what they please;
 Swarming all term-time thro' the Strand like bees,
 They buzz at Westminster and lie for fees.
 The godly too their ways of getting have,
 But none so much as your fanatick knave;
 Wisely the wealthiest livings they refuse
 Who by the fattest bishopricks would lose,
 Who with short hair, large ears, and small blue band,
 True rogues! their own not God's elect command.
 Let pigs then be profane, but broths allow'd;
 Possets and Christian caudles may be good.
 Meet helps to reinforce a brother's brood;
 Therefore each female faint he doth advise
 With groans, and hums, and has, and goggling eyes,
 To rub him down and make the spirit rise,
 While with his zeal transported from the ground
 He mounts, and sanctifies the sisters round.
 On poets only no kind star e'er smil'd;
 Curst Fate has damn'd 'em ev'ry mother's child;
 Therefore he warns his brothers of the stage
 To write no more for an ungrateful age.
 Think what penurious masters you have serv'd;
 Tasso ran mad, and noble Spenser starv'd:

Turn then, whoe'er thou art, thou canst write well,
 Thy ink to gall, and in lampoons excel;
 Forswear all honesty, traduce the great,
 Grow impudent, and rail against the state;
 Bursting with spleen abroad thy pasquils send,
 And chuse some libel spreader for thy friend:
 The wit and want of Timon point thy mind,
 And for thy satire subject chuse mankind.

Dramatis Personae.

MEN.

THEODOSIUS,	_____	_____	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>
VARANES,	_____	_____	Mr. Brereton.
MARCIAN,	_____	_____	Mr. Barry.
LUCIUS,	_____	_____	Mr. Aickin.
ATTICUS, chief priest,	_____	_____	Mr. Keen.
LEONTINE,	_____	_____	Mr. J. Aickin.
ARANTHES,	_____	_____	Mr. Hurst.
			Mr. Davies.

WOMEN.

PULCHERIA,	_____	_____	Miss Sherry.
ATHENAIS,	_____	_____	Mrs. Barry.

Attendants, Chorus.

SCENE CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE ODOSIUS†.

ACT. I

SCENE, a stately temple, which represents the Christian religion as in its first magnificence, being but lately established at Rome and Constantinople; the side-scenes shew the horrid tortures with which the Roman tyrants persecuted the church, and the flat scene, which is the limit of the prospect, discovers an altar richly adorned; before it CONSTANTINE, supposed, kneels, with commanders about him, gazing at a bloody cross in the air, which being encompassed with many angels offers itself to view with these words distinctly written, *In hoc signo vinces.* Instruments are heard, and many attendants; the ministers at divine service walk busily up and down till ATTICUS, the chief of all the priests, and successor of St. Chrysostom, in rich robes comes forward with the philosopher LEONTINE, the waiters in ranks bowing all the way before him.

A Chorus heard at a distance.

PREPARE, prepare! the rites begin,
Let none unhallow'd enter in;
The temple with new glories shines,
Adorn the altars, wash the shrines,
And purge the place from sin.

Attic. Oh Leontine! was ever morn like this
Since the celestial incarnation dawn'd?
I think no day since that such glory gave
To Christian altars as this morning brings.

Leon. Great successor of holy Chrysostom,

† The lines distinguished by inverted commas are omitted in the representation.

" Who now triumphs above a saint of honour,
 " Next in degree to those bright sons of Heav'n
 " Who never fell nor stain'd their orient beams,"
 What shall I answer, how shall I approach you
 Since my conversion, which your breath inspir'd?

Attic. To see this day the Emp'rour of the East
 Leaves all the pleasures that the earth can yield,
 " That Nature can bestow or art invent.
 " In his life's spring and bloom of gawdy years,
 " Confin'd to narrow rooms and gloomy walks,
 " Fasting and exercises of devotion,
 " Which from his bed at midnight must awake him"
 To undergo the penance of a cloister,
 Methinks, oh Leontine! 'tis something more
 Than yet philosophy could ever reach.

Leon. True Atticus; you have amaz'd my reason.

Attic. Yet more: to our religion's lasting honour
 Mariana and Flavilla, two young virgins
 Imperial born, cast in the fairest mould
 That e'er the hands of Beauty form'd for woman,
 " The mirrors of our court, where Chastity
 " And Innocence might copy spotless lustre,"
 To-day with Theodosius leave the world.

Leon. Methinks at such a glorious resignation
 Th' angelick orders should at once descend
 " In all the paint and drapery of heav'n,
 " With charming voices and with lulling strings"
 To give full grace to such triumphant zeal.

Attic. No, Leontine; I fear there is a fault,
 For when I last confess'd the Emperour
 " Whether disgust and melancholy blood
 " From restless passions urg'd not this divorce?"
 He only answer'd me with sighs and blushes.
 'Tis sure his soul is of the tend'rest make,
 Therefore I'll tax him strictly: but, my friend,
 Why should I give his character to you,
 Who when his father sent him into Persia
 Were by that mighty monarch then appointed
 To breed him with his son, the Prince Varanes?

Leon. And what will raise your admiration is,
 That two such diff'rent tempers should agree.
 You know that Theodosius is compos'd

Of all the softness that should make a woman ;
 Judgment almost like fear foreruns his actions,
 And he will poise an injury so long
 As if he had rather pardon than revenge it ;
 But the young Persian Prince, quite opposite,
 So fiery fierce that those who view him nearly
 May see his haughty soul still mounting in his face ;
 Yet did I study these so diff'rent tempers.
 Till I at last had form'd a perfect union,
 " As if two souls did but inform one body ;"
 A friendship that may challenge all the world,
 And at the proof be matchless.

Attic. I long to read

This gallant prince, who as you have inform'd me
 Comes from his father's court to see our Emperour.

Leon. So he intended till he came to Athens,
 And at my homely board beheld my daughter,
 Where as Fate order'd it, she, who never saw
 The glories of a court, " bred up to books
 " In closets like a Sybil ; she, I say,
 " (Long since from Persia brought by me to Athens)"
 Unskill'd in charms but those which Nature gave her,
 Wounded this scornful prince : in short, he forc'd me
 To wait him thither, with deep protestations
 That moment that bereft him of the sight.
 Of Athenais gave him certain death..
 But see, my daughter honour'd with his presence.

[*They retire.*]

Enter VARANES and ATHENAI.

Var. 'Tis strange, oh Athenais ! wondrous all,
 Wondrous the shrines, and wonderful the altars.
 The martyrs, 'tho' but drawn in painted flames,
 Amaze me with the image of their sufferings ;
 Saints canoniz'd that dar'd with Roman tyrants,
 Hermits that liv'd in caves and fed with angels.
 By Orosimades it is wondrous all !
 That bloody cross in yonder azure sky,
 Above the head of kneeling Constantine,
 Inscrib'd about with golden characters
Thou shalt o'ercome in this ; if it be true,
 I say again by Heav'n 't is wondrous strange.

Athen. Oh Prince ! if thus imagination stirs you,
 A fancy rais'd from figures in dead walls,

How would the sacred breath of Atticus
 Inspire your breast, purge all your dross away,
 And drive this Athenais from your soul,
 "To make a virgin room whom yet the mould
 "Of your rude fancy cannot comprehend!"

Var. What says my fair! drive Athenais from me!
 "Start me not into frenzy, lest I rail
 "At all religion and fall but with Heav'n."
 And what is she, alas! that would supplant thee?
 Were she the mistress of the world, as fair
 As winter stars or summer setting suns,
 And thou set by in nature's plainest dress,
 With that chaste modest look when first I saw thee
 The heiress of a poor philosopher, [*Records ready to*
 I swear by all I wish, by all I love, *flourish.*
 Glory and thee, I would not lose a thought
 Nor cast an eye that way, but rush to thee,
 To these lov'd arms, and lose myself for ever.

Athen. Forbear my Lord.

Var. Oh, cruel Athenais!
 Why dost thou put me off who pine to death,
 And thrust me from thee when I would approach thee?
 Can there be aught in this? Curse then thy birthright,
 Thy glorious titles and ill-suited greatness,
 Since Athenais scorns thee: take again
 Your ill-tim'd honours; take 'em, take 'em, gods,
 And change me to some humble villager,
 If so at last for toils at scorching noon
 In mowing meadows or in reaping fields
 At night she will but crown me with a smile,
 Or reach the bounty of her hand to bless me.

Athen. When princes speak their subjects should be silent;
 Yet with humility I would demand
 Wherein appears my scorn or my aversion?
 Have I not for your sake abandon'd home,
 Where I had vow'd to spend my calmer days?
 But you perhaps imagine it but little.
 For a poor maid to follow you abroad,
 Especially the daughter of old Leontine;
 Yet I must tell you Prince——

Var. I cannot bear
 Those frowns: I have offended; but forgive me;
 For who, oh Athenais! that is tofs'd

With such tempestuous tides of love as I
Can steer a steady course? Retire my fair.

[*Recorders flourish.*]

Hark! the solemnities are now beginning,
And Theodosius comes. Hide, hide thy charms;
If to his clouded eyes such day should break
The royal youth, who dotes to death for love,
I fear would forfeit all his vows to Heav'n,
And fix upon the world, thy world of beauty. [*Exeunt.*
Enter THEODOSIUS leading MARIANA and FLAVILLA, (all
three dressed in white) followed by PULCHERIA.

Theo. Farewell Pulcheria, and I pray no more,
For all thy kind complaints are lost upon me.
Have I not sworn the world and I must part?
Fate has proclaim'd it; therefore weep no more:
"Wound not the tend'rest part of Theodosius,
"My yielding soul, that would expire in calms:"
Wound me not with thy tears and I will tell thee,
Yet ere I take my last farewell for ever,
The cause of all my suff'rings. Oh my sister!
A bleeding heart, the stings of pointed love,
What constitution soft as mine can bear?

Pulch. My Lord, my Emperour, my dearest brother!
Why all this while did you conceal it from me?

Theo. Because I was ashamed to own my weakness;
"I knew thy sharper wit and stricter wisdom
"Would dart reproofs which I could not endure."
Draw near, oh Atticus! and mark me well,
For never yet did my complaining spirit
Unlade this weighty secret on him,
Nor groan a syllable of her oppression.

Attic. Concealment was a fault; but speak at large,
Make bare the wound, and I will pour in balm.

Theo. 'Tis folly all and fondness—Oh remembrance!
Why dost thou open thus my wound again,
And from my heart call down those warmer drops
That make me die with shame? Hear then, Pulcheria.
Some few preceding days before I left
The Persian court, hunting one morning early
I lost myself and all the company.
Still wand'ring on as Fortune would direct me
I past a rivulet, and lighted in

The sweetest solitude I ever saw,
 When straight, as if enchantment had been there,
 Two charming voices drew me till I came
 Where divers arbours overlook'd the river.
 Upon the osier bank two women sat,
 Who when their song was ended talk'd to one
 Who bathing stood far in the crystal stream;
 But oh! what thought can paint that fair perfection,
 Or give a glimpse of such a naked glory!
 Not seaborn Venus in the courts beneath,
 When the green nymphs first kiss'd her coral lips,
 All polish'd fair and wash'd with orient beauty,
 Could in my dazzling fancy match her brightness.

Attic. Think where you are.

Theo. Oh Sir! you must forgive me:

The chaste enthusiastick form appears
 As when I saw her; yet I swear Pulcheria,
 Had cold Diana been a looker on
 She must have prais'd the virtues of the virgin.
 "The Satyrs could not grin," for she was veil'd;
 From her naked bosom
 Down to her knees the nymph was wrapp'd in lawn:
 But oh! for me, for me, that was too much!
 "Her legs, her arms, her hands, her neck, her breasts,
 "So nicely shap'd, so matchless in their lustre;"
 Such allperfection, that I took whole-draughts
 Of killing love, and ever since have languish'd
 With ling'ring surfeits of her fatal beauty:
 "Alas! too fatal sure!"—Oh Atticus!
 Forgive me, for my story now is done.
 The nymph was dress'd, and with her two companions,
 Having descry'd me, shriek'd and fled away,
 Leaving me motionless, till Leontine,
 Th' instructor of my youth, by chance came in,
 And wak'd me from the wonder that entranc'd me.

Attic. Behold, my Lord, the man whom you have nam'd
 The harbinger of Prince Varanes here.

Enter LEONTINE.

Theo. Oh Leontine, ten thousand welcomes meet thee!
 Thou fosterfather of my tender youth,
 "Who rear'd the plant and prun'd it with such care,
 "How shall I look upon thee, who am fall'n

"From all the principles of manlier reason,
 "By thee infus'd to more than woman's weakness!"
 Now by the majesty divine that awes
 This sacred place I swear you must not kneel!
 And tell me, for I have a thousand things
 To ask thee, where, where is my godlike friend?
 Is he arriv'd, and shall I see his face
 Before I'm cloister'd from the world for ever?

Leon. He comes, my Lord, with all th' expecting joys
 Of a young promis'd lover: from his eyes
 Big hopes look forth, and boiling Fancy forms
 Nothing but Theodosius still before him:
 His thought, his ev'ry word, is Theodosius.

Theo. Yet Leontine, yet answer me once more;
 With tremblings I demand thee.
 Say—hast thou seen, oh! has that heav'nly form
 Appear'd to thee again?—Behold he's dumb:
 Proceed then to the solemn last farewell;
 Never was man so willing and prepar'd.

Enter VARANES, ARANTHES, and Attendants.

Var. Where is my friend? oh, where is my belov'd,
 My Theodosius! point him out ye gods!
 That I may press him dead betwixt my arms,
 Devour him thus with over-hasty joys
 That languish at his breast quite out of breath,
 And cannot utter more.

Theo. Thou mightiest pleasure,
 And greatest blessing that kind Heav'n could send
 To glad my parting soul, a thousand welcomes!
 Oh! when I look on thee new starts of glory
 Spring in my breast, and with a backward bound
 I run the race of lusty youth again.

Var. By Heav'n it joys me too when I remember
 Our thousand pastimes, when we borrow'd names,
 Alcides I, and thou my dearest Theseus,
 When thro' the woods we chas'd the foaming boar
 With hounds that open'd like Thessalian bulls,
 Like tigers slu'd, and fanded as the shore,
 With ears and chests that dash'd the morning dew;
 Driv'n with a spurt, as ships are tost in storms,
 We ran like hinds, and matchless was our course!
 Now sweeping o'er the limit of a hill,

Now with a full career come thund'ring down
The precipice and sweat along the vale.

Theo. Oh glorious time! and when the gath'ring clouds
Have call'd us home, say, did we rest my brother?
When on the stage to the admiring court
We strove to represent Alcides' fury
In all that raging heat and pomp of madness
With which the stately Seneca adorn'd him,
So lively drawn, and painted with such horror
That we were forc'd to give it o'er, so loud
The virgins shriek'd, so fast they dy'd away.

Var. My Theodosius still; 'tis my lov'd brother!
And by the gods we'll see those times again!
Why then has Rumour wrong'd thee, that reported
Christian enthusiasm had charm'd thee from us;
That drawn by priests, and work'd by melancholy,
Thou hadst laid the golden reins of empire down
And sworn thyself a votary for ever?

Theo. 'Tis almost true; and had not you arriv'd
The solemn bus'ness had by this been ended.
This I have made the Empress of the East
My elder sister: these with me retire,
Devoted to the pow'r whom we adore.

Var. What pow'r is that that merits such oblations?
I thought the Sun more great and glorious
Than any that e'er mingled with the gods,
Yet ev'n to him my father never offer'd
More than a hecatomb of bulls and horses.
Now by those golden beams that glad the world
I swear it is too much; for one of these
But half so bright our god would drive no more;
He'd leave the darken'd globe, and in some cave
Enjoy such charms for ever.

Attic. My Lord, forbear;
Such language does not suit with our devotions:
Nothing profane must dare to murmur here,
Nor stain the hallow'd beauties of the place.
Yet thus far we must yield; the Emperour
Is not enough prepar'd to leave the world.

Var. Thus low, most Rev'rend of this sacred place,
I bow for pardon, and am half converted,
By your permission that my Theodosius

Return to my embraces. Oh my brother!
 Why dost thou droop? there will be time enough
 For pray'r and fasting and religious vows;
 Let us enjoy, while yet thou art my own,
 All the magnificence of eastern courts.
 I hate to walk a lazy life away;
 Let's run the race which Fate has set before us,
 And post to the dark gaol.

Theo. "Cruel destiny!
 "Why am not I thus too? Oh my Varanes!
 "Why are these costly dishes set before me?
 "Why do these sounds of pleasure strike my ears?
 "Why are these joys brought to my sick remembrance,
 "Who have no appetite, but am to sense
 "From head to foot all a dead palsy o'er?
Var. "Fear not my friend; all shall be well
 "Again; for I have thousand ways and thousand stories
 "To raise thee up to pleasure. We'll unlock
 "Our fastest secrets, shed upon each other
 "Our tend'rest cares, and quite unbar those doors
 "Which shall be shut to all mankind beside."

Attic. Silence and rev'rence are the temple's dues,
 Therefore while we pursue the sacred rites
 Be these observ'd, or quit the awful place.
 "Imperial sisters, now twin-stars of heav'n,
 "Answer the successor of Chrysostom,
 "Without least reservation answer me,
 "By those harmonious rules I charg'd ye learn."

ATTICUS sings.

Attic. Canst thou, Marina, leave the world,
 The world that is devotion's bane,
 Where crowns are tost and sceptres hurl'd,
 Where Lust and proud Ambition reign?

2. *Priest.* "Can you your costly robes forbear
 "To live with us in poor attire?
 "Can you from courts to cells repair
 "To sing at midnight in our choir?"

3. *Priest.* "Can you forget your golden beds,
 "Where you might sleep beyond the morn,
 "On mats to lay your royal heads
 "And have your beauteous tresses shorn?

Attic. "Can you resolve to fast all day,
 "And weep and groan to be forgiv'n?
 "Can you in broken slumbers pray,
 "And by affliction merit heav'n?"

Chor. Say, Votaries, can this be done?
 While we the grace divine implore
 The world is lost, the battle's won,
 And sin shall never charm ye more.

MARINA sings.

The gate to bliss does open stand,
 And all my penance is in view;
 The world upon the other hand
 Cries out, Oh do not bid adieu!

"Yet, sacred Sir, in these extremes,
 "Where Pomp and Pride their glories tell,
 "Where Youth and Beauty are the themes,
 "And plead their moving cause so well;"

If aught that's vain my thoughts possess,
 Or any passions govern here
 But what divinity may bless,
 Oh, may I never enter there!

FLAVILLA sings.

"What can pomp or glory do,
 "Or what can human charms persuade?
 "That mind that has a heav'n in view
 "How can it be by earth betray'd?

"No monarch full of youth and fame,
 "The joy of eyes and nature's pride,
 "Should once my thoughts from heav'n reclaim,
 "Tho' now he woo'd me for his bride."

Haste then, oh haste! and take us in,
 For ever lock religion's door;
 Secure us from the charms of sin,
 And let us see the world no more.

ATTICUS *sings.*

Hark, hark! behold the heav'nly choir,
They cleave the air in bright attire,
And see his late each angel brings,
And hark! divinely thus he sings:
To the Pow'rs divine all glory be giv'n
By men upon earth and angels in heav'n.

[*Scene shuts, and all the Priests, with Marina and Flavilla, disappear.*]

Pulch. For ever gone! for ever parted from me!
Oh Theodosius! till this cruel moment
I never knew how tenderly I lov'd 'em;
But on this everlasting separation
Methinks my soul has left me, and my time
Of dissolution points me to the grave.

Theo. Oh my Varanes! does not now thy temper
Bate something of its fire? dost thou not melt
In mere compassion of my sister's fate,
And cool thyself with one relenting thought?

Var. Yes, my dar'd soul rolls inward; melancholy,
Which I ne'er felt before, now comes upon me,
And I begin to loathe all human greatness:
Oh! sigh not then, nor thy hard fate deplore,
For 't is resolv'd we will be kings no more:
We'll fly all courts, and Love shall be our guide,
Love, that's more worth than all the world beside.
Princes are barr'd the liberty to roam;
The fetter'd mind still languishes at home;
In golden bands she treads the thoughtful round,
Bus'ness and cares eternally abound;
And when for air the goddess would unbind
She's clogg'd with sceptres and to crowns confin'd. [*Exe.*]

ACT II.

SCENE, *the palace.**Enter PULCHERIA, JULIA, and Attendants.*

PULCHERIA.

THese packets for the Emperour Honorius:
 Be swift, let th' agent haste to Rome——
 I hear, my Julia, that our general
 Is from the Goths return'd with conquest home.

Jul. He is; to-day I saw him in the presence
 Sharp to the courtiers, as he ever was,
 Because they went not with him to the wars:
 To you he bows, and sues to kiss your hand.

Pulch. He shall, my dearest Julia! Oft' I've told thee
 The secret of my soul. If e'er I marry
 Marcian's my husband: he's a man, my Julia,
 Whom I've study'd long, and found him perfect;
 Old Rome at ev'ry glance looks thro' his eyes
 And kindles the beholders. Some sharp atoms
 Run thro' his frame which I could wish were out:
 He sickens at the softness of the Emp'rour,
 And speaks too freely of our female court,
 Then sighs, comparing it with what Rome was.

Enter MARCIAN and LUCIUS.

Pulch. Ha! who are these that dare profane this place
 With more than barb'rous insolence?

Mar. At your feet
 Behold I cast the scourge of these offenders,
 And kneel to kiss your hand.

Pulch. Put up your sword;
 And ere I bid you welcome from the wars
 Be sure you clear your honour of this rudeness,
 Or, Marcian, leave the court.

Mar. Thus then, Madam:
 The Emperour receiv'd me with affection,
 Embrac'd me for my conquests, and retir'd;
 When on a sudden all the gilded flies
 That buzz about the court came flutt'ring round me:
 This with affected cringes and minc'd words
 Begs me to tell my tale of victories;

Which done he thanks me, slips behind his fellow,
 Whispers him in the ear, then smiles and listens
 While I relate my story once again :
 A third comes in and asks me the same favour,
 Whereon they laugh, while I, still ignorant,
 Go on ; but one behind, more impudent,
 Strikes on my shoulder, then they laugh'd outright ;
 But then I, guessing the abuse too late,
 Return'd my knight behind a box o' the ear,
 Then drew, and briefly told them they were rascals :
 They, laughing still, cry'd out the gen'ral's musty ;
 Whereon I drove 'em, Madam, as you saw.
 This is, in short, the truth ; I leave the judgment
 To your own justice : if I have done ill
 Sentence me, and I'll leave the court for ever.

Pulch. First, you are welcome, Marcian, from the wars,
 And still whene'er occasion calls for arms
 Heav'n send the Emperour a general
 Renown'd as Marcian ! As to what is past,
 I think the world will rather praise than censure
 Pulcheria when she pardons you the action.

Mar. Gods, gods ! and thou great founder of old Rome !
 What is become of all that mighty spirit
 That rais'd our empire to a pitch so high ?
 " Where is it pent ? What but almighty pow'r
 " Could thus confine it, that but some few atoms
 " Now run thro' all the East and Occident ? "

Pulch. Speak calmly Marcian——

Mar. Who can be temperate
 That thinks as I do Madam ! Why ? here's a fellow,
 I've seen him fight against a troop of Vandals
 In your defence, as if he lov'd to bleed.
 " Come to my arms my dear ! thou canst not talk,
 " But hast a soul above the proudest of 'em.
 " Oh Madam ! when he has been all over blood,
 " And hack'd with wounds that seem'd to mouth his praises,
 " I've seen him smile still as he push'd Death from him,
 " And with his actions rally distant Fate.

Pulch. " He has a noble form."

Mar. Yet ev'n this man,
 That fought so bravely in his country's cause,

This excellent man, this morning, in the presence,
 Did I see wrong'd before the Emperour,
 Scorn'd and despis'd, because he could not cringe,
 Nor plant his feet as some of them could do.

"One said his clothes were not well made, and damn'd

"His tailor——another said he look'd

"As if he had not lost his maidenhead."

If things are suffer'd to be thus down all

Authority, preeminence, degree and virtue;

Let Rome be never mention'd; no, i' th' name

Of all the gods be she forgotten ever!

Effeminate Persians and the Lydian softness

Make all your fights: Marcian shall out no more,

For by my arms it makes a woman of me,

And my swol'n eyes run o'er, to think this worth,

This fuller honour than the whole court holds,

Should be ridiculous to knaves and fools,

"Should starve for want of what is necessary

"To life's convenience, when luxurious bawds

"Are so o'ergrown with fat and cramm'd with riot

"That they can hardly walk without an engine."

Pulch. Why did not you inform the Emperour?

Mar. Because he will not hear me. Alas! good man,

He flies from this bad world; and still when wars

And dangers come he runs to his devotions,

To your new thing, I know not what you call it,

Which Constantine began.

Pulch. How, Marcian! are not you

Of that religion which the Emp'rour owns?

Mar. No Madam. If you'll see my honest thought

I am not of their principle that take

A wrong; so far from bearing with a foe

I would strike first, like old Rome; "I would forth,

"Elbow the neighb'ring nations round about,

"Invade, enlarge my empire to the bounds

"Of the too narrow universe. Yes, I own.

"That I despise your holy innovations;

"I'm for the Roman gods, for funeral piles,

"For mounting Eagles, and the fancy'd greatness

"Of our forefathers." Methinks my heated spirit

Could utter things worth losing of my head.

Pulch. Speak freely Marcian, for I know thee honest.

Mar. Oh, Madam! long, long, may the Emp'rour live!
 But I must say his gentle disposition
 Suits not, alas! the oriental sway:
 " Bid him but look on Pharamond; oh Gods!
 " Awake him with the image of that spirit,
 " Which like a pyramid revers'd is grown
 " Ev'n from a point to the most dreadful greatness:
 " His very name already shakes the world,
 " And still in person heading his fierce squadrons,
 " Like the first Cæsar o'er the hardy Gauls,
 " He seems another thunderbolt of war."

Pulch. I oft' have blam'd my brother most for this,
 That to my hand he leaves the state affairs;
 And how that sounds you know——

Mar. Forgive me, Madam!
 I think that all the greatness of your sex,
 Rome's Clelia, and the fam'd Semiramis,
 " With all the Amazonian valour too,"
 Meet in Pulcheria: yet I say forgive me
 If with reluctance I behold a woman
 Sit at the empire's helm and steer the world.

Pulch. I stand rebuk'd——

Mar. " Mark but the growing French:
 " The most auspicious omen of their greatness
 " That I can guess is their late Salique Law,
 " Bless'd by their priests the Salii, and pronounc'd
 " To stand for ever, which excludes all women
 " From the imperial crown." But oh! I speak
 The least of all those infinite grievances
 Which make the subjects murmur. In the army
 Tho' I proceeded still like Hannibal,
 And punish'd ev'ry mutineer with death,
 Yet oh! it stabb'd me thro' and thro' the soul
 To pass the wretches' doom, because I knew
 With justice they complain'd; for hard they fought,
 And with their blood earn'd that forbidden bread
 Which some at court, and great ones, tho' unnam'd,
 Cast to their hounds, while the poor soldiers starv'd——

Pulch. Your pity too, in mournful fellowship,
 No doubt might sooth their murmurs.

Mar. Yes it did;
 That I might put them once again in heart

I said 't was true the Emp'rour was to blame,
 Who dealt too coldly with his faithful servants,
 And paid their great arrears by second-hands :
 I promis'd too when we return'd to court
 Things should be mended—

But how, oh Gods ! forgive my blood this transport ;
 To the eternal shame of female counsels,

And to the blast of Theodosius' name,
 Whom never warlike chronicle shall mention,
 " Oh, let me speak it with a Roman spirit ! "

We were receiv'd like undone prodigals,
 By curs'd ungrateful stewards, with cold looks,
 Who yet got all by those poor wretches' ruin,
 " Like malefactors at the hands of justice.

" I blush, I almost weep, with bursting rage ;

" If thus receiv'd how paid our long arrears ?

" Why, as intrusted misers pay the rights

" Of helpless widows or the orphans' tears.

" Oh soldier ! for to thee, to thee I speak it,

" Bawds for the drudgery of citizens' wives

" Would better pay debilitated stallions."

Madam, I've said perhaps too much ; if so

It matters not ; for he who lies, like me,

On the hard ground is sure to fall no further.

Pulch. I've giv'n you patient hearing, honest Marcian,
 And as far as I can see into your temper,

" I speak my serious judgment in cold blood,

" With strictest consultation on the matter,"

I think this seeming plain and honest Marcian

An exquisite and most notorious traitor.

Mar. Ha ! traitor !

Pulch. Yes, a most notorious traitor.

Mar. " Your grandfather, whose frown could awe the
 " Would not have call'd me so—or if he had— [world,

Pulch. " You would have taken it"—But to the
 bus'ness.

Was't not enough, oh Heav'n thou know'st too much !

At first to own yourself an infidel,

A bold contemner, ev'n to blasphemy,

Of that religion which we all profess,

For which your heart's best blood can ne'er suffice,

But you must dare with a seditious army

Thus to conspire against the Emperour?
 I mention not your impudence to me,
 Taxing the folly of my government
 Ev'n to my face, such an irreverence
 As sure no barb'rous Vandal would have urg'd;
 Besides your libelling all the court, as if
 You had engros'd the whole world's honesty,
 And flatt'ers, fools, and sycophants, and knaves,
 Such was your language, did inhabit there.

Mar. You wrest my honest meaning, by the gods
 You do; "and if you thus go on I feel
 "My struggling spirit will no longer bear it."

Pulch. I thought the meaning of all rational men
 Should still be gather'd out of their discourse;
 Nor are you so imprudent without thinking
 To vent such words, tho' now you fain would hide it.
 You find the guilt and balk the accusation.
 But think not you shall scape so easily:
 Once more I do confront you as a traitor;
 And as I am intrusted with full pow'r,
 Divest you in the name of Theodosius
 Of all your offices, commissions, honours,
 Command you leave the court within three days,
 Loyal plain-dealing honest Marcian.

Mar. Gods! gods!

Pulch. "What now? Ha! does the traitor murmur?
 "If in three days—mark me—'t is I that doom thee—
 "Rash inconsiderate man, a wretch beneath
 "The torments I could execute upon thee,"
 If after three days' space thou'rt found in court
 Thou dy'st; thy head, thy head shall pay the forfeit.
 "Now rage, now rail, and curse the court,
 "Saucily dare t' abuse the best of princes,
 "And let thy lawless tongue lash all it can;
 "Do, like a madman rave, deplore thy fortune
 "While pages laugh at thee." Then haste to th' army,
 Grow popular, and lead the multitude;
 Preach up thy wrongs, and drive the giddy beast
 To kick at Cæsar. Nay, if thou weep'st I'm gone.
 Oh Julia! if I stay I shall weep too.
 Yet 't is but just that I the heart should see
 Of him who once must lord it over me.

[*Aside.*

[*Exeunt Pulch. and Julia.*

Luc. Why do you droop Sir?—Come, no more o' this;
 You are and shall be still our general.
 Say but the word I'll fill the Hippodrome
 With squadrons that shall make the Emp'rour tremble;
 We'll fire the court about his ears.
Methinks, like Junius Brutus, I have watch'd
 An opportunity, and now it comes.
 Few words and I are friends; but, noble Marcian!
 If yet thou art not more than general
 Ere dead of night say Lucius is a coward.

Mar. I charge thee in the name of all the gods
 Come back; I charge thee by the name of Friend.
 All's well, and I rejoice I am no general.
 But hush! within three days we must begone,
 And then, my friend, farewell to ceremony:
 We'll fly to some far distant lonely village,
 Forget our former state, and breed with slaves,
 And when night comes,
 With bodies coarsely fill'd and vacant souls
 Sleep like the labour'd hinds, and never think,
 For if I think again I shall go mad:

Enter LEONTINE and ATHENAIS.

Therefore no thought. But see, we're interrupted.
 Oh court! oh Emperour!—yet let death threaten
 I'll find a time; till then be still my soul—
 “No gen’ral now; a member of thy country,
 “But most corrupt, therefore to be cut off;
 “Loyal plain-dealing honest Marcian.
 “A slave, a traitor! Oh ye eternal Gods!”—

[*Exeunt.*]

Leon. So Athenais, now our compliment
 To the young Persian prince is at an end,
 What then remains but that we take our leave,
 And bid him everlastingly farewell?

Athen. My Lord!

Leon. I say that decency requires
 We should be gone, nor can you stay with honour.

Athen. Most true my Lord!

Leon. The court is now at peace,
 The Emp'rour's sisters are retir'd for ever,
 And he himself compos'd; what hinders then
 But that we bid adieu to Prince Varanes?

Athen. Ah Sir! why will you break my heart?

Leon. I would not;

Thou art the only comfort of my age:
Like an old tree I stand amongst the storms;
Thou art the only limb that I have left me, [*She kneels.*
My dear green branch! and how I prize thee, child,
Heav'n only knows. Why dost thou kneel and weep?

Athen. Because you are so good, and will, I hope,
Forgive my fault, who first occasion'd it.

Leon. I charg'd thee to receive and hear the prince.

Athen. You did; and oh! my Lord, I heard too much,
Too much, I fear, for my eternal quiet.

Leon. Rise Athenais; credit him who bears
More years than thou: Varanes has deceiv'd thee.

Athen. How do we differ then? You judge the prince
Impious and base, while I take Heav'n to witness
I think him the most virtuous of men;
Therefore take heed, my Lord, how you accuse him
Before you make the trial. Alas Varanes!
If thou art false there's no such thing on earth
As solid goodness or substantial honour.
A thousand times, my Lord, he has sworn to give me
(And I believe his oaths) his crown and empire
That day I make him master of my heart.

Leon. That day he'll make thee mistress of his pow'r,
Which carries a foul name among the vulgar.
No, Athenais, let me see thee dead,
Borne a pale corpse, and gently laid in earth,
So I may say she's chaste and dy'd a virgin,
Rather than view thee with these wounded eyes
Seated upon the throne of Isdigerdes,
The blast of common tongues, the nobles' scorn,
Thy father's curse, that is, the prince's whore.

Athen. Oh, horrid supposition! how I detest it
Be witness Heav'n, that sees my secret thoughts!
"Have I for this, my Lord, been taught by you
"The nicest justice and severest virtue,
"To fear no death, to know no end of life,
"And with long search discern the highest good?
"No, Athenais; when the day beholds thee
"So scandalously rais'd pride cast thee down,
"The scorn of honour and the people's prey!"
No, cruel Leontine, not to redeem

That aged head from the descending axe,
 Not tho' I saw thy trembling body rack'd,
 Thy wrinkles all about thee fill'd with blood,
 Would I for empire to the man I love
 Be made the object of unlawful pleasure.

Leon. Oh, greatly said, and by the blood which warms me!
 Which runs as rich as any Athens holds,
 It would improve the virtue of the world
 If ev'ry day a thousand votaries
 And thousand virgins came from far to hear thee!

Athen. Look down ye Pow'rs, take notice we obey
 The rigid principles ye have infus'd;
 Yet oh, my noble father! to convince you,
 Since you will have it so, propose a marriage,
 Tho' with the thought I'm cover'd o'er with blushes:
 Not that I doubt the prince; that were to doubt
 The Heav'ns themselves. I know he is all truth:
 But modesty——

The virgin's troublesome and constant guest,
 That, that alone forbids.——

Leon. I wish to Heav'n.
 There prove no greater bar to my relief.
 Behold the prince: I will retire a while,
 And when occasion calls come to thy aid. [*Exit Leon.*]

Enter VARANES and ARANTHES.

Var. To fix her on the throne to me seems little;
 Were I a god yet would I raise her higher;
 This is the nature of thy prince: but oh!
 As to the world thy judgment soars above me,
 And I am dar'd with this gigantick honour;
 Glory forbids her prospect to a crown,
 Nor must she gaze that way: my haughty soul
 That day when she ascends the throne of Cyrus
 Will leave my body pale, and to the stars
 Retire in blushes, and quite lost for ever.

Aran. What do you purpose then?

Var. I know not what.
 But see, she comes, the glory of my arms,
 The only bus'ness of my instant thought,
 My soul's best joy, and all my true repose.
 I swear I cannot bear these strange desires,
 These strong impulses, which will shortly leave me
 Dead at thy feet——

Athen. What have you found, my Lord,
In me so harsh or cruel that you fear
To speak your griefs?

Var. First let me kneel and swear,
And on thy hand seal my religious vow;
Straight let the breath of gods blow me from earth,
Swept from the book of Fame, forgotten ever,
If I prefer thee not, oh Athenais!
To all the Persian greatness.

Athen. I believe you,
For I have heard you swear as much before.

Var. Hast thou? oh, why then did I swear again,
But that my love knew nothing worthier of thee,
And could no better way express my passion?

Athen. Oh, rise my Lord!——

Var. I will do ev'ry thing
Which Athenais bids: if there be more
In nature to convince thee of my love
Whisper it oh, some god, into my ear,
And on her breast thus to her list'ning soul
I'll breathe the inspiration. Wilt thou not speak?
What, but one sigh, no more! can that suffice
For all my vast expense of prodigal love?

"Oh Athenais! what shall I say or do

"To gain the thing I wish?—

Athen. "What's that my Lord?

Var. "Thus to approach thee still, thus to behold
"Yet there is more"—— [thee——

Athen. My Lord, I dare not hear you.

Var. Why dost thou frown at what thou dost not know?
'Tis an imagination which ne'er pierc'd thee;
Yet as 't is ravishing 'tis full of honour.

Athen. I must not doubt you Sir; but oh! I tremble
To think if Isdigerdes should behold you,
Should hear you thus protesting to a maid
Of no degree but virtue in the world——

Var. No more of this, no more; for I disdain
All pomp when thou art by. Far be the noise
Of kings and courts from us, whose gentle souls
Our kinder stars have steer'd another way.
Free as the forest birds we'll pair together,
Without rememb'ring who our fathers were,

Fly to the arbours, grots, and flow'ry meads,
 And in soft murmurs interchange our souls,
 Together drink the crystal of the stream,
 Or taste the yellow fruit which autumn yields,
 And when the golden ev'ning calls us home
 Wing to our downy nest and sleep till morn.

Athen. Ah Prince! no more: forbear, forbear, to charm
 Since I am doom'd to leave you Sir for ever. [me,

Var. Hold, Athenais——

Athen. I know your royal temper,
 And that high honour reigns within your breast,
 Which would disdain to waste so many hours
 With one of humble blood compar'd to you
 Unless strong passion sway'd your thoughts to love her;
 Therefore receive, oh Prince! and take it kindly,
 For none on earth but you could win it from me,
 Receive the gift of my eternal love;
 'Tis all I can bestow; nor is it little,
 For sure a heart so coldly chaste as mine
 No charms but your's, my Lord, could e'er have warm'd.

Var. Well have you made amends by this last comfort
 For the cold dart you shot at me before:
 For this last goodness, oh my Athenais!
 (For now methinks I ought to call you mine)
 I empty all my soul in thanks before you:
 Yet oh! one fear remains, like death it chills me,
 Why my relenting love did talk of parting!

Athen. Look there, and cease your wonder. I have
 T' obey my father, and he calls me hence—— [sworn

Enter LEONTINE.

Var. Ha, Leontine! by which of all my actions
 Have I so deeply injur'd thee to merit
 The smartest wound revenge could form to end me?

Leon. Answer me now, oh Prince! for virtue prompts
 And honesty will dally now no longer: [me,
 What can the end of all this passion be?
 Glory requires the strict account, and asks
 What you intend at last to Athenais?

Var. How, Leontine!

Leon. You saw her, Sir, at Athens, said you lov'd her:
 I charg'd her humbly to receive the honour,
 And hear your passion. Has she not, Sir, obey'd me?

Var. She has, I thank the gods; but whither wouldst

Leon. Having resolv'd to visit Theodosius [thou?
You swore you would not go without my daughter,
Whereon I gave command that she should follow.

Var. Yes, Leontine, my old remembrancer,
Most learn'd of all philosophers, you did.

Leon. Thus long she has attended: you have seen her,
Sounded her virtues and her imperfections;
Therefore, dread Sir! forgive this bolder charge
Which honour sounds, and now let me demand you—

Var. Now help, Arantes, or I'm dash'd for ever.

Aran. Whatever happens, Sir, disdain the marriage.

Leon. Can your high thoughts so far forget themselves.
T' admit this humble virgin for your bride?

Var. Ha!

Athen. He blushes, gods! and stammers at the question!

Leon. Why do you walk and chafe yourself my Lord?
The bus'ness is not much.

Var. How, Leontine!

Not much! I know that she deserves a crown;
Yet 'tis to reason much, tho' not to love:
And sure the world would blush to see the daughter
Of a philosopher upon the throne of Cyrus.

Athen. Undone for ever!

Leon. Is this your answer Sir?

Var. Why dost thou urge me thus, and push me to
The very brink of glory? where, alas!
I look and tremble at the vast descent;
Yet ev'n there to the vast bottom down
My rash advent'rer Love would have me leap,
And grasp my Athenais with my ruin.

Leon. 'Tis well my Lord——

Var. Why dost thou then provoke me?
I thought that Persia's court had store of honour
To satisfy the height of thy ambition.
Besides, old man, my Love is too well grown
To want a tutor for his good behaviour:
What he will do he of himself will do,
And not be taught by you——

Leon. I know he will not;

Fond tears away! I know, I know he will not;;

But he would buy with his old man's preferment
My daughter's shame.

Var. Away, I say! my soul disdains the motion.

Leon. The motion of a marriage; yes, I see it:
Your angry looks and haughty words betray it;
I found it at the first. I thank you, Sir,
You have at last rewarded your old tutor
For all his cares, his watchings, services:
Yet let me tell you Sir, this humble maid,
This daughter of a poor philosopher,
Shall, if she please, be seated on a throne
As high as that of the immortal Cyrus.

Var. I think that age and deep philosophy
Have crack'd thy brain. Farewell, old Leontine;
Retire to rest; and when this brawling humour
Is rock'd asleep I'll meet my Athenais,
And clear th' accounts of love which thou hast blotted.

[*Exit.*]

Leon. Old Leontine! Perhaps I'm mad indeed.
But hold, my heart, and let that solid virtue
Which I so long ador'd still keep the reins.
Oh Athenais! but I will not chide thee:
Fate is in all our actions; and methinks,
At least a father judges so, it has
Rebuk'd thee smartly for thy easiness:
There is a kind of mournful eloquence
In thy dumb grief which shames all clam'rous sorrow.

Athen. "Alas! my breast is full of death; methinks:
"I fear ev'n you——"

Leon. "Why shouldst thou fear thy father?"

Athen. "Because you have the figure of a man!"
Is there, oh speak! a possibility
To be forgiv'n?"

Leon. Thy father does forgive thee,
And honour will; but on this hard condition;
Never to see him more——

Athen. See him! oh Heav'ns!

Leon. Unless it be, my daughter, to upbraid him;
Not tho' he should repent and straight return,
Nay, proffer thee his crown——No more of that.
Honour too cries revenge, revenge thy wrongs,
Revenge thyself, revenge thy injur'd father;

For 'tis revenge so wise, so glorious too,
As all the world shall praise——

Athen. Oh, give me leave,
For yet I am all tenderness: the woman,
The weak, the mild, the fond, the coward, woman,
Dares not look forth, but runs about my breast,
And visits all the warmer mansions there,
Where she so oft' has harbour'd false Varanes!
Cruel Varanes! false forsworn Varanes!

Leon. Is this forgetting him? is this the course
Which honour bids thee take?

Athen. Ah Sir, allow
A little time for Love to make his way:
Hardly he won the place, and many sighs,
And many tears, and thousand oaths, it cost him:
And oh! I find he will not be dislodg'd
Without a groan at parting hence for ever.
No, no! he vows he will not yet be rais'd
Without whole floods of grief at his farewell,
Which thus I sacrifice: and oh! I swear
Had he prov'd true I would as easily
Have empty'd all my blood, and dy'd to serve him.
As now I shed these drops or vent these sighs
To shew how well how perfectly I lov'd him.

Leon. No woman sure but thou, so low in fortune,
Therefore the nobler is thy fair example,
Would thus have griev'd because a prince ador'd her;
Nor will it be believ'd in aftertimes
That there was ever such a maid in being:
Yet do I still advise preserve thy virtue;
And since he does disdain thee for his bride
Scorn thou to be——

Athen. Hold, Sir; oh, hold, forbear;
For my nice soul abhors the very sound;
Yet with the shame of that and the desire
Of an immortal name I am inspir'd:
All kinder thoughts are fled for ever from me;
All tenderness, as if I ne'er had lov'd,
Has left my bosom colder than the grave.

Leon. Oh Athenais! on; 'tis bright before thee;
Pursue the track, and thou shalt be a star.

Athen. Oh Leontine! I swear, my noble father,

That I will starve ere once forego my virtue:
 And thus let's join to contradict the world,
 That empire could not tempt a poor old man
 To sell his prince the honour of his daughter,
 And she too match'd the spirit of her father;
 Tho' humbly born and yet more humbly bred
 She for her fame refus'd a royal bed;
 Who tho' she lov'd yet did put off the hour,
 Nor could her virtue be betray'd by pow'r.
 Patterns like these will guilty courts improve,
 And teach the fair to blush at conscious love:
 "Then let all maids for honour come in view,
 "If any maid can more for glory do."

ACT III.

Enter VARANES and ARANTHES.

VARANES.

COME to my arms, my faithful dear Aranthès,
 Soft counsellor, companion of my youth!
 If I had longer been alone most sure
 With the distraction that surrounds my heart
 My hand would have rebell'd against his master
 And done a murder here.

Aran. "The gods forbid!

Var. "I swear I press thee with as hearty joy
 "As ever fearful bride embrac'd her man
 "When from a dream of death she wak'd, and found
 "Her lover safe and sleeping by her side."

Aran. The cause my Lord?

Var. Early thou know'st last night I went to rest;
 But long, my friend, ere slumber clos'd my eyes,
 Long was the combat fought 'twixt love and glory;
 The fever of my passion burnt me up;
 My pangs grew stronger, and my rack was doubled;
 "My bed was all afloat with the cold drops
 "That mortal pain wrang from my lab'ring limbs,
 "My groans more deep than others' dying gasps;
 Therefore I charge thee haste to her apartment;

"I do conjure thee tell her, tell her all
 "My fears can urge or fondness can invent;
 "Tell her how I repent; say any thing,
 "For any thing I'll do to quench my fires:"
 Say I will marry her now on the instant;
 Say all that I would say, yet in the end
 My love shall make it more than gods can utter.

Aran. My Lord, both Leontine and she are gone
 From their apartment——

Var. Ha! gone, say'st thou! whither?

Aran. That was my whole employment all this day;
 But Sir, I grieve to speak it, they have left
 No track behind for care to find 'em out;
 Nor is it possible——

Var. It is, it shall;
 I'll struggle with impossibilities
 To find my Athenais: not the walls
 Of Athens nor of Thebes shall hide her from me:
 I'll bring the force of all my father's arms
 And lay 'em waste but I'll redeem my love.
 Oh Leontine! morose old Leontine!
 Thou mere philosopher! oh, cruel sage!
 Who for one hasty word, one chol'rick doubt,
 Hast turn'd the scale, tho' in the sacred balance
 My life, my glory, and my empire, hung!

Aran. Most sure, my Lord, they are retir'd to Athens.
 I will send post to-night——

Var. No, no, Arantes;
 Prepare my chariots, for I'll go in person.
 I swear till now, till I began to fear
 Some other might enjoy my Athenais,
 I swear I did not know how much I lov'd her.
 But let's away; I'll to the Emperour,
 Thou to the hasty management of my business.
 "Prepare; to-day I'll go, to-day I'll find her:
 "No more; I'll take my leave of Theodosius,
 "And meet thee on the Hippodrome. Away;"
 Let the wild hurry of the master's love
 Make quick thy apprehension: haste, and leave me.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE, PULCHERIA, ATTICUS, LEONTINE; *Votaries leading* ATHENAIS *in procession, after her baptism, to be confirmed.*

ATTICUS *sings.*

" Oh Chrysoſtom ! look down and ſee
 " An off'ring worthy Heav'n and thee !
 " So rich the victim, bright and fair,
 " That ſhe on earth appears a ſtar :
Chor. " Eudofia is the virgin's name,
 " And aſtetimes ſhall ſing her fame.

ATTICUS *sings.*

" Lead her, *Votaries*, lead her in,
 " Her holy birth does now begin.
1ſt Votary. " In humble weeds but clean array
 " Your hours ſhall ſweetly paſs away,
 " And when the rites divine are paſt
 " To pleaſant gardens you ſhall haſte.
2d Votary. " Where many a flow'ry bed we have,
 " That emblem ſtill to each a grave ;
 " And when within the ſtream we look
 " With tears we uſe to ſwell the brook ;
 " But oh ! when in the liquid glaſs
 " Our heav'n appears, we ſigh to paſs :
Chor. " For heav'n alone we are deſign'd,
 " And all things bring our heav'n to mind."

Athen. Oh Princeſs ! oh ! moſt worthy of the world,
 That is ſubmitted by its Emperour [*Kneels.*]
 To your moſt wiſe and providential ſway !
 What Greek or Roman eloquence can paint
 The rapture and devotion of my ſoul !
 I am adopted your's ; you are my goddeſs,
 That have new-form'd, new-moulded, my conception,
 " And by the platform of a work divine
 " New-ſtam'd, new-built, me to your own deſires,
 " Thrown all the lumber of my paſſions out,
 " And made my heart a manſion of perfection !
 " Clean as an anchorite's grot or votariſt's cell,
 " And ſpotleſs as the glories of his ſlips
 " Whom we far oft' adore.
Pulch. Riſe Eudofia,
 And let me fold my Ch
 With this dear ple

I seal thee, oh Eudofia ! mine for ever :
 Accept, best charge, the vows of my affection,
 For by the sacred friendship that I give thee
 I think that Heav'n by miracle did send thee
 To ease my cares, to help me in my counsels,
 To be my sister, partner in my bed,
 And equally thro' my whole course of life
 To be the better part of thy Pulcheria,
 And share my griefs and joys.

Athen. No, Madam, no ;

Excuse the cares that this sad wretch must bring you :

" Oh ! rather let me leave the world for ever ; "

Or if I must partake your royal secrets,

" If you resolve to load me with such honour, "

Let it be far from cities, far from courts,

Where I may fly all human conversation,

Where I may never see, nor hear, nor name,

Nor think, nor dream, oh Heav'n ! if possible,

Of mankind more.

Pulch. " What now ! in tears Eudofia !

Athen. " Far from the guilt of palaces, oh, send me !

' Drive me, oh, drive me from the traitor man !

' So I might scape that monster let me dwell

' In lions' haunts or in some tiger's den ;

' Place me on some steep, craggy, ruin'd rock,

' That bellies out, just dropping in the ocean ;

' Bury me in the hollow of its womb,

' Where starving on my cold and flinty bed

I may from far, with giddy apprehension,

See infinite fathoms down the rumbling abyss ;

Yet not e'en there, in that vast whirl of death,

Can there be found so terrible a ruin

As man, false man, smiling, destructive man. "

Pulch. Then thou hast lov'd Eudofia. *Ch.* Ev' heart

Still nearer to my heart, so much the more,

Because our fates are like, and here's a bond

Our Fortunes lead us to the same end

In gladness or in grief.

" And bear'st thy part in love's melodious ill,
 " Love, that like bane perfum'd infects the mind,
 " That sad delight that charms all womankind."

Athen. Yes, Madam, I confess that Love has charm'd me,
 But never shall again: " no, I renounce him.

" Inspire me all the wrongs of abus'd woman;
 " All you that have been cozen'd by false men
 " See what a strict example I will make;
 " But for the perjuries of one I will revenge ye
 " For all that's past, that's present, and to come.

Pulch. "Oh, thou far more than the most masculine virtue!
 " Where, our *Astrea*, where, oh drowning brightness!
 " Where hast thou been so long? Let me again
 " Protest my admiration and my love;
 " Let me declare aloud, while thou art here,
 " While such clear virtue shines within our circle,
 " Vice shall no more appear within the palace,
 " But hide her dazzl'd eyes, and this be call'd
 " The holy court. But" lo! the Emp'rour comes:
 Beauty like thine may drive that far away
 That has so long entranc'd his soul——My Lord——

Enter THEODOSIUS and Attendants.

Theo. If yet, alas! I might but hope to see her;
 But oh! forgive me Heav'n, this wilder start
 That thus would reach impossibility:
 No, no, I never must behold her more;
 As well my *Atticus* might raise the dead
 As *Leontine* should charm that form in view.

Pulch. My Lord, I come to give your grief a cure,
 With purer flames to draw that cruel fire
 That tortur'd you so long——Behold this virgin——
 The daughter of your tutor *Leontine*.

Theo. Ah!

Pulch. "She is your sister's charge, and made a Christian,
 " And *Athenais* is *Eudisia* now:
 " Be sure a fairer never grac'd religion,
 " And for her virtue she transcends example."

Theo. Oh, all you blest above! how can this be?
 Am I awake? or is this possible? [*Athen. kneels*]

Pulch. She kneels my Lord; will not you go and raise her?

Theo. Nay, do thou raise her, for I'm rooted here;
 Yet if laborious love and melancholy
 Have not o'ercome me, and quite turn'd me mad,
 It must be she, that naked dazzling sweetness!
 The very figure of that morning-star
 That, dropping pearls and shedding dewy beams,
 Fled from the greedy waves when I approach'd.
 Answer me Leontine; am I distracted,
 Or is this true?—"By thee in all encounters
 "I will be rul'd, in temperance and wildness,
 "When reason clashes with extravagance.
 "But speak"—

Leon. 'Tis true, my Lord; this is my daughter,
 Whom I conceal'd in Persia from all eyes
 But your's, when chance directed you that way.

Theo. He says 'tis true: why then this heartless carriage,
This lazy spirit?

"Oh, were I proof against the darts of love,
 "And cold to beauty as the marble lover
 "That lies without a thought upon his tomb,
 "Would not this glorious dawn of life run thro' me
 "And waken death itself!" Why am I slow then?
 What hinders now but that in spite of rules
 I burst thro' all the bands of death that hold me,

[*He kneels.*]

And fly with such a haste to that appearance
 As bury'd faints shall make at the last summons?

Athen. The Emp'rour at my feet! Oh Sir! forgive me,
 Drown me not thus with everlasting shame:
 Both heav'n and earth must blush at such a view,
 Nor can I bear it longer—

Leon. My Lord, she is unworthy—

Theo. Ha! what say'st thou Leontine?

"Unworthy! oh, thou atheist to perfection!
 "All that the blooming earth cou'd send forth fair,
 "All that the gaudy heav'ns cou'd drop down glorious!"
 Unworthy, say'st thou! Wert thou not her father
 I swear I would revenge—But haste and tell me,
 For love like mine will bear no second thought.
 Can all the honours of the orient,
 Thus sacrific'd with the most pure affection,
 With spotless thoughts and languishing desires,

Obtain, oh Leontine! the crown at last?
To thee I speak, thy daughter to my bride?

Leon. My Lord, the honour bears such estimation
It calls the blood into my aged cheeks,
And quite o'erwhelms my daughter with confusion,
Who with her body prostrate on the earth
Ought to adore you for the proffer'd glory.

Theo. Let me embrace and thank thee, oh kind Heav'n!
Oh Atticus! Pulcheria! oh my father!
Was ever change like mine? Run thro' the streets;
"Who waits there?" Run, and loud as Fame can speak
With trumpet sounds proclaim your Emp'rour's joy:
"And as of old, on the great festival
"Of her they call the Mother of the Gods,
"Let all work cease, at least an oaken garland
"Crown each plebeian head; let sprightly bowls
"Be dol'd about, and the tofs'd cymbals sound;
"Tell 'em their much lamented Theodosius
"By miracle is brought from death to life;
"His melancholy's gone, and now once more
"He shall appear at the state's helm again;
"Nor fear a wreck while this bright star directs us,
"For while she shines no sands no cowering rocks
"Shall lie unseen, but I will cut my way
"Secure as Neptune thro' the highest stream,
"And to the port in safety steer the world."

Athen. Alas! my Lord, consider my extraction,
With all my other wants——

Theo. Peace, Empress, peace!
No more the daughter of old Leontine,
A Christian now, and partner of the east.

Athen. My father has dispos'd me, you command me;
What can I answer then but my obedience?

Theo. Attend her, dear Pulcheria! and oh, tell her
To-morrow, if she please, I will be happy.
Oh, why so long should I my joys delay?

[*Exeunt Pulch. and Athen.*]

Time, imp thy wings, let not thy minutes stay,
But to a moment change the tedious day:
"The day! 't will be an age before to-morrow:
"An age, a death, a vast eternity,
"Where we shall cold and past enjoyment lie."

Enter VARANES and ARANTHES.

Var. Oh Theodosius!

Theo. Ha! my brother here!

Why dost thou come to make my bliss run o'er?

"What is there more to wish? Fortune can find

"No flaw in such a glut of happiness

"To let one misery in"—Oh, my Varanes!

Thou that of late didst seem to walk on clouds,

Now give a loose, let go the slacken'd reins,

Let us drive down the precipice of joy,

As if that all the winds of heav'n were for us.

Var. My Lord, I'm glad to find the gale is turn'd,

And give you joy of this auspicious fortune.

Plough on your way with all your streamers out;

With all your glorious flags and garlands ride

Triumphant on—and leave me to the waves,

The sands, the winds, the rocks, the sure destruction

And ready gulfs that gape to swallow me.

Theo. It was thy hand that drew me from the grave,

Who had been dead by this time to ambition,

To crowns, to titles, and my slighted greatness:

But still, as if each work of thine deserv'd

The smile of Heav'n—thy Theodosius met

With something dearer than his diadem,

With all that's worth a wish, that's worth a life;

I met with that which made me leave the world.

Var. And I, oh turn of chance! oh cursed fortune!

Have lost at once all that could make me happy.

"Oh ye too partial Pow'rs! but now no more:

"The gods, my dear my most lov'd Theodosius,

"Double all those joys that thou hast met upon thee!

"For sure thou art most worthy, worthy more

"Than Jove in all his prodigality

"Can e'er bestow in blessings on mankind."

And oh! methinks my soul is strangely mov'd,

Takes it the more unkindly of her stars

That thou and I cannot be blest together;

For I must leave thee friend! this night must leave thee,

To go in doubtful search of what perhaps

I ne'er shall find, if so my cruel Fate

Has order'd it. Why then farewell for ever,

For I shall never never see thee more.

Theo. How sensible my tender soul is grown
 Of what you utter! Oh my gallant friend!
 Oh brother! oh Varanes! do not judge
 By what I speak, for sighs will interrupt me:
 Judge by my tears, judge by these strict embraces,
 And by my last resolve: tho' I have met
 With what in silence I so long ador'd;
 Tho' in the rapture of protesting joys
 I had set down to-morrow for my nuptials,
 "And Atticus to-night prepares the temple,"
 Yet my Varanes! I will rob my soul
 Of all her health, of my imperial bride,
 And wander with thee in the search of that
 On which thy life depends——

Var. If this I suffer
 Conclude me then begotten of a hind,
 And bred in wilds: no Theodosius, no;
 I charge thee by our friendship, and conjure thee
 By all the gods, to mention this no more.
 Perhaps, dear friend! I shall be sooner here
 Than you expect or I myself imagine:
 What most I grieve is that I cannot wait
 To see your nuptials; yet my soul is with you,
 And all my adorations to your bride.

Theo. What, my Varanes! will you be so cruel
 As not to see my bride before you go?
 Or are you angry at your rival's charms,
 Who has already ravish'd half my heart,
 That once was all your own?

Var. You know I am disorder'd;
 My melancholy will not suit her blest condition.

[*Exit Theo.*]

And the gods know since thou, my Athenais,
 Art fled from these sick eyes all other women
 To my pall'd soul seem like the ghost of Beauty,
 And haunt my mem'ry with the loss of thee.

Enter ATHENAIS, THEODOSIUS *leading her.*

Theo. Behold, my Lord, th' occasion of my joy.

Var. Oh ye immortal gods! Arantes! oh!
 Look there, and wonder. Ha! is't possible?

Athen. My Lord, the Emp'rour says you are his friend;
 He charges me to use my interest,

And beg of you to stay at least so long
As our espousals will be solemnizing :
I told him I was honour'd once to know you,
But that so slightly as I could not warrant
The grant of any thing that I should ask you—

Var. Oh heav'n and earth ! oh Athenais ! why,
Why dost thou use me thus ? Had I the world
Thou know'st it should be thine—

Athen. I know not that—

But yet, to make sure work, one half of it
Is mine already Sir without your giving.
My Lord ; the prince is obstinate ; his glory
Scorns to be mov'd by the weak breath of woman ;
He is all hero, bent for higher views,
Therefore 't is noble Sir to let him go :
If not for him my Lord, yet for myself
I must entreat the favour to retire. [Exit Athen. &c.

Var. Death and despair ! confusion ! hell, and Furies !

Theo. “ Heav'n guard thy health, and still preserve
thy virtue,”

What should this mean ? I fear the consequence,
For 't is too plain they know each other well.

Var. Undone Arantes ! lost, undone for ever !

I see my doom, I read it with broad eyes,
As plain as if I saw the book of Fate :
Yet I will muster all my spirits up,
Digest my grief, swallow the rising passions ;
Yes, I will stand the shock of all the gods
Well as I can, and struggle for my life.

Theo. You muse my Lord ; and if you 'll give me leave
To judge your thoughts they seem employ'd at present
About my bride—“ I guess you know her too.”

Var. His bride ! oh gods ! give me a moment's patience.
I must confess the sight of Athenais,
Where I so little did expect to see her,
So grac'd, and so adorn'd, did raise my wonder :
But what exceeds all admiration is,
That you should talk of making her your bride ;
'T is such a blind effect of monstrous fortune,
That tho' I well remember you affirm'd it
I cannot yet believe—

Theo. Then now believe me :
By all the Pow'rs divine I will espouse her.

Var. Ha! I shall leap the bounds. Come, come, my Lord,

By all these pow'rs you nam'd I say you must not.

Theo. I say I will; and who shall bar my pleasure?
Yet more, I speak the judgment of my soul,
Weigh but with fortune merit in the balance,
And Athenais loses by the marriage.

Var. Relentless Fates! malicious cruel Pow'rs!
Oh, for what crime do you thus rack your creature?
Sir, I must tell you this unkingly meanness
Suits the profession of an anchorite well,
But in an oriental emperour
It gives offence; nor can you without scandal,
Without the notion of a grov'ling spirit,
Espouse the daughter of old Leontine,
Whose utmost glory is to've been my tutor.

Theo. He has so well acquitted that employment,
Breeding you up to such a gallant height
Of full perfection and imperial greatness,
That ev'n for this respect, if for no other,
I will esteem him worthy while I live.

Var. My Lord, you'll pardon me a little freedom;
For I must boldly urge in such a cause
Whoever flatters you, tho' ne'er so near
Related to your blood, should be suspected.

Theo. If friendship would admit a cold suspicion,
After what I have heard and seen to-day,
Of all mankind I should suspect Varanes.

Var. He has stung me to the heart; my groans will
choke me

Unless my struggling passion gets a vent.
Out with it then—I can no more dissemble—
Yes, yes, my Lord! since you reduce me to
The last necessity I must confess it;
I must avow my flame for Athenais:
I am all fire, my passion eats me up,
It grows incorp'rate with my flesh and blood:
My pangs redouble; now they cleave my heart!
Oh Athenais! oh Eudofia!—Oh!—

“Tho' plain as day I see my own destruction:

“Yet to my death, and oh, let all the gods

“Bear witness! still I swear I will adore thee!”

Theo. Alas, Varanes! which of us two the heav'ns
Have mark'd for death is yet above the stars;
But while we live let us preserve our friendship
Sacred and just, as we have ever done.
This only mean in two such hard extremes
Remains for both: to-morrow you shall see her
With all advantage in her own apartment;
Take your own time; say all you can to gain her;
If you can win her lead her into Persia;
If not, consent that I espouse her here.

Var. Still worse and worse! Oh Theodosius! oh,
I cannot speak for sighs; my death is seal'd
By his last sweetness: had you been less good
I might have hop'd; but now my doom's at hand:
Go then and take her, take her to the temple;
The gods too give you joy! Oh Athenais!
Why does thy image mock my foolish sorrow?
Oh Theodosius! do not see my tears:
Away and leave me; leave me to the grave.

Theo. Farewell; let's leave the issue to the heav'ns;
I will prepare your way with all that honour
Can urge in your behalf, tho' to my ruin. [*Ex. Theo.*]

Var. Oh, I could tear my limbs and eat my flesh!
Fool that I was, fond, proud, vainglorious, fool!
Damn'd be all courts, and trebly damn'd ambition!
Blasted be thy remembrance! curses on thee!
And plagues on plagues fall on those fools that seek thee!

Aran. Have comfort Sir——

Var. Away and leave me villain!
Traitor, who wrought me first to my destruction!——
Yet stay and help, help me to curse my pride,
Help me to wish that I had ne'er been royal,
That I had never heard the name of Cyrus,
"That my first brawl in court had been my last."
Oh that I had been born some happy swain,
And never known a life so great so vain!
Where I extremes might not be forc'd to chuse,
And blest with some mean wife no crown could lose,
Where the dear partner of my little state,
With all her smiling offspring at the gate,
Blessing my labours might my coming wait;

Where in our humble beds all safe might lie,
And not in curst course for glory die—

[*Exeunt.*]

SONG.

I.

“ Hail to the myrtle shade,
“ All hail to the nymphs of the fields;
“ Kings would not here invade
“ Those pleasures that virtue yields.

Chor. “ Beauty here opens her arms
“ To soften the languishing mind,
“ And Phillis unlocks her charms :
“ Ah Phillis! ah! why so kind?

II.

“ Phillis, thou soul of love,
“ Thou joy of the neighb'ring swains;
“ Phillis that crowns the grove,
“ And Phillis that gilds the plains;

Chor. “ Phillis, that ne'er had the skill
“ To paint and to patch and be fine;
“ Yet Phillis whose eyes can kill,
“ Whom Nature had made divine;

III.

“ Phillis, whose charming song
“ Makes labour and pains a delight;
“ Phillis, that makes the day young,
“ And shortens the livelong night;

Chor. “ Phillis, whose lips like May
“ Still laughs at the sweets that they bring,
“ Where love never knows decay,
“ But sets with eternal spring.”

ACT IV.

Enter MARCIAN and LUCIUS at a distance.

MARCIAN.

THE gen'ral of the Oriental armies
 Was a commission large as Fate could give:
 'Tis gone. "Why, what care I? Oh Fortune! Fortune!"
 "Thou laughing empress of this busy world,
 "Marcian defies thee now"——
 Why what a thing is a discarded favourite!
 "He who but now, tho' longing to retire,
 "Cou'd not for busy waiters be alone,
 "Throng'd in his chamber, haunted to his closet
 "With a full crowd and an eternal court!"
 When once the favour of his prince is turn'd
 Shunn'd as a ghost the clouded man appears,
 And all the gaudy worshippers forsake him.
 "So fares it now with me; where'er I come,
 "As if I were another Catiline,
 "The courtiers rise, and no man will fit near me:
 "As if the plague were on me all men fly me."
 Oh Lucius! Lucius! if thou leav'st me too
 I think, I think, I could not bear it,
 But like a slave my spirit, broke with suff'ring,
 Should on these coward knees fall down, and beg
 Once to be great again——

Luc. Forbid it Heav'n!

That e'er the noble Marcian condescend
 To ask of any but th' immortal gods!
 Nay, I vow if yet your spirit dare
 Spite of the court you shall be great as Cæsar.

Mar. "No, Lucius, no; the gods repel that humour.
 "Yet since we are alone, and must ere long
 "Leave this bad court, let us like veterans
 "Speak out—Thou say'st, alas! as great as Cæsar;
 "But where's his greatness? where is his ambition?
 "If any sparks of virtue yet remain
 "In this poor figure of the Roman glory,
 "I say if any be, how dim they shine
 "Compar'd with what his great forefathers were!"

" How should he lighten then or awe the world
 " Whose soul in courts is but a lambent fire?
 " And scarce, oh Rome! a glowworm in the field,
 " Soft, young, religious, godlike qualities,
 " For one that should recover the lost empire,
 " And wade thro' seas of blood and walk o'er mountains
 " Of slaughter'd bodies to immortal honour."

Luc. Poor heart! he pin'd a while ago for love—

Mar. And for his mistress vow'd to leave the world;
 But some new chance it seems has chang'd his mind.
 A marriage! but to whom, or whence she came,
 None knows; but yet a marriage is proclaim'd,
 Pageants prepar'd, the arches are adorn'd,
 " The statues crown'd, the Hippodrome does groan
 " Beneath the burden of the mounted warriors:"
 The theatre is open'd too, where he
 And the hot Persian mean to act their follies.
 Gods! gods! is this the image of our Cæsars?
 Is this the model of our Romulus?

Oh why so poorly have you stamp'd Rome's glory!
 " Not Rome's but your's—Is this man fit to bear it,
 " This waxen portraiture of Majesty,
 " Which ev'ry warmer passion does melt down,
 " And makes him fonder than a woman's longing?"

Luc. Thus much I know to the eternal shame
 Of the imperial blood; this upstart empress,
 This fine new queen, is sprung from abject parents,
 Nay, basely born: but that's all one to him;
 He likes and loves, and therefore marries her.

Mar. Shall I not speak, shall I not tell him of it?
 I feel this big-swol'n throbbing Roman spirit
 Will burst unless I utter what I ought.

Enter PULCHERIA with a paper in her hand, and JULIA.

Mar. Pulcheria here! why she's the scourge of Marcian;
 I tremble too whenever she approaches,
 " And my heart dances an unusual measure:
 " Spite of myself I blush, and cannot stir
 " While she is here"—What, Lucius, can this mean?
 " 'Tis said Calphurnia had the heart of Cæsar,
 " Augustus doted on the subtle Livia,
 " Why then should not I worship that fair angel?
 " Oh! didst thou mark her when her fury lighten'd?

"She seem'd all goddess, nay, her frowns became her:
 "There was a beauty in her very wildness.
 "Were I a man born great as our first founder,
 "Sprung from the blood divine—but I am cast
 "Beyond all possibility of hope."

Pulch. Come hither Marcian, read this paper o'er,
 And mark the strange neglect of Theodosius:
 He signs whate'er I bring; perhaps you've heard
 To-morrow he intends to wed a maid of Athens,
 New-made a Christian, and new-nam'd Eudofia,
 Whom he more dearly prizes than his empire,
 Yet in this paper he hath set his hand,
 And seal'd it too with the imperial signet,
 That she shall lose her head to-morrow morning.

Mar. 'Tis not for me to judge; yet this seems strange.

Pulch. I know he rather would commit a murder
 On his own person than permit a vein
 Of her to bleed; yet, Marcian, what might follow
 If I were envious of this virgin's honour
 By his rash passing whatsoe'er I offer——
 Without a view—Ha! but I had forgot:
 Julia, let's haste from this infectious person——
 I had forgot that Marcian was a traitor:
 "Yet by the Pow'rs divine I swear 'tis pity
 "That one so form'd by nature for all honour,
 "All titles, greatness, dignities imperial,
 "The noblest person, and the bravest courage,
 "Should not be honest. Julia, is't not pity!"
 Oh Marcian! Marcian! I could weep to think
 Virtue should lose itself as thine has done.
 Repent, rash man! if yet 'tis not too late,
 And mend thy errors; so farewell for ever.

[*Exeunt Pulch. and Julia.*]

Mar. Farewell for ever! no Madam, ere I go
 I am resolv'd to speak, and you shall hear me;
 Then if you please take off this traitor's head:
 End my commission and my life together.

Luc. Perhaps you'll doubt of what I'm going to say;
 But by your life my Lord I think 'tis true;
 Pulcheria loves this traitor! "Did you mark her?"
 "At first she had forgot your banishment;
 "Makes you her counsellor, and tells her secrets

" As to a friend ; nay, leaves them in your hand,
 " And says 't is pity that you are not honest,
 " With such description of your gallantry
 " As none but Love could make ; then taking leave,
 " Thro' the dark lashes of her darting eyes
 " Methought she shot her soul at ev'ry glance,
 " Still looking back, as if she had a mind
 " That you should know she left her heart behind her."

Mar. Alas ! thou dost not know her, nor do I,
 Nor can the wit of all mankind conceive her.
 But let's away. This paper is of use.

Luc. I guess your purpose :
 He is a boy, and as a boy you'll use him :
 There is no other way.

Mar. Yes, if he be not
 Quite dead with sleep, for ever lost to honour,
 Marcian with this shall rouse him. Oh my Lucius !
 Methinks the ghosts of the great Theodosius
 And thund'ring Constantine appear before me ;
 They charge me as a soldier to chastise him,
 To lash him with keen words from lazy love,
 And shew him how they trod the paths of honour. [*Exit.*]

SCENE, THEODOSIUS *lying on a couch, with two boys dressed like Cupids singing to him as he sleeps.*

SONG.

" Happy day ! ah, happy day !
 " That Cæsar's beams did first display ;
 " So peaceful was the happy day
 " The gods themselves did all look down
 " The royal infant's birth to crown,
 " So pleas'd they scarce did on the guilty frown.
 " Happy day ! ah, happy day !
 " And oh, thrice happy hour !
 " That made such goodness master of such pow'r ;
 " For thus the gods declare to men
 " No day like this shall ever come again."

Enter MARCIAN with an order.

Theo. "Ha! what rash thing art thou who sett'st so small

"A value on thy life thus to presume
 "Against the fatal orders I have giv'n,
 "Thus to entrench on Cæsar's solitude,
 "And urge me to thy ruin?"

Mar. "Mighty Cæsar!

"I have transgress'd, and for my pardon bow
 "To thee as to the gods when I offend;
 "Nor can I doubt your mercy when you know
 "The nature of my crime. I am commission'd
 "From all the earth to give thee thanks and praises,
 "Thou darling of mankind! whose conqu'ring arms
 "Already drown the glory of great Julius,
 "Whose deeper reach in laws and policy
 "Makes wise Augustus envy thee in heav'n.
 "What mean the Fates by such prodigious virtue?
 "When scarce the manly down yet shades thy face
 "With conquest thus to overrun the world,
 "And make barbarians tremble? Oh ye gods!
 "Should Destiny now end thee in thy bloom
 "Methinks I see thee mourn'd above the loss
 "Of lov'd Germanicus, thy funerals,
 "Like his, are solemniz'd with tears and blood.

Theo. "How, Marcian!

Mar. "Yes, the raging multitude,

"Like torrents, set no bound to their mad grief,
 "Shave their wives' heads, and tear off their own hair;
 "With wild despair they bring their infants out
 "To brawl their parents' sorrow in the streets:
 "Trade is no more, all courts of justice stopp'd;
 "With stones they dash the windows of their temples,
 "Pull down their altars, break their household gods,
 "And still the universal groan is this,
 "Constantinople's lost, our empire's ruin'd:
 "Since he is gone that father of his country,
 "Since he is dead, oh life! where is thy pleasure?
 "Oh Rome! oh conquer'd world! where is thy glory?"

Theo. "I know thee well, thy custom and thy manners;
 "Thou dost upbraid me; but no more of this,
 "Not for thy life——"

Mar. "What's life without my honour?"

" Could you transform yourself into a Gorgon,
" Or make that beardless face like Jupiter's;
" I would be heard in spite of all your thunder.
" Oh pow'r of guilt! you fear to stand the test
" Which virtue brings; like sores your vices shake
" Before this Roman healer: but by the gods
" Before I go I'll rip the malady,
" And let the venom flow before your eyes:
" This is a debt to the great Theodosius,
" The grandfather of your illustrious blood,
" And then farewell for ever.

Theo. " Presuming Marcian!

" What canst thou urge against my innocence?
" Thro' the whole course of all my harmless youth,
" Ev'n to this hour, I cannot call to mind
" One wicked act which I have done to shame me.

Mar. " This may be true; yet if you give the sway
" To other hands, and your poor subjects suffer,
" Your negligence to them is as the cause.
" Oh Theodosius! credit me who know
" The world, and hear how soldiers censure kings.
" In aftertimes, if thus you should go on,
" Your memory by warriors will be scorn'd,
" As much as Nero or Caligula loath'd;
" They will despise your sloth and backward ease
" More than they hate the others' cruelty.
" And what a thing, ye gods! is scorn or pity?
" Heap on me, Heav'n, the hate of all mankind,
" Load me with malice, envy, detestation,
" Let me be horrid to all apprehension,
" And the world shun me, so I scape but scorn.

Theo. " Prithee no more.

Mar. " Nay, when the legions make comparisons,
" And say thus cruel Nero once resolv'd
" On Galba's insurrection for revenge,
" To give all France as plunder to the arms,
" To poison the whole senate at a feast,
" To burn the city, turn the wild beasts out,
" Bears, lions, tigers, on the multitude,
" That so obstructing those that quench'd the fire
" He might at once destroy rebellious Rome.

Theo. " Oh cruelty! why tell'st thou me of this?
" Am I of such a barb'rous bloody temper?

Mar. Yet some will say this shew'd he had a spirit,
" However fierce, avenging, and pernicious,
" That favour'd of a Roman: but for you,
" What can your partial sycophants invent
" To make you room among the Emperours,
" Whose utmost is the smallest part of Nero,
" A petty player, one that can act a hero,
" And never be one? Oh ye immortal gods!
" Is this the old Cæsarian majesty?
" Now in the name of our great Romulus
" Why sing you not and fiddle too as he did,
" Why have you not like Nero a Phenascus,
" One to take care of your celestial voice?
" Lie on your back my Lord, and on your stomach
" Lay a thin plate of lead, abstain from fruits,
" And when the bus'ness of the stage is done
" Retire with your loose friends to costly banquets
" While the lean army groans upon the ground.

Theo. " Leave me I say, lest I chastise thee:
" Hence, begone, I say——

Mar. " Not till you have heard me out—
" Build too, like him, a palace lin'd with gold,
" As long and large as that to the Esquiline:
" Enclose a pool too in it like the sea,
" And at the empire's cost let navies meet;
" Adorn your starry chambers too with gems;
" Contrive the plated ceilings to turn round,
" With pipes to cast ambrosial oils upon you;
" Consume with this prodigious vanity
" In mere perfumes and odorous distillations
" Of essences at once four hundred millions;
" Let naked virgins wait you at your table,
" And wanton Cupids dance and clap their wings;
" No matter what becomes of the poor soldiers;
" So they perform the drudgery they are fit for
" Why, let 'em starve for want of their arrears,
" Drop as they go, and lie, like dogs, in ditches.

Theo. " Come, you are a traitor——

Mar. " Go to, you are a boy—
" Or by the gods——

Theo. " If arrogance like this,
 " And to the Emp'rour's face, should scape unpunish'd
 " I'll write myself a coward—Die then villain,
 " A death too glorious for so bad a man,
 " By Theodosius' hand.

[*Marcian disarms him, but is wounded.*]

Mar. Now Sir, where are you?

" What in the name of all our Roman spirits
 " Now charms my hand from giving thee thy fate?
 " Has he not cut me off from all my honours,
 " Torn my commissions, sham'd me to the earth,
 " Banish'd the court, a vagabon'd for ever?
 " Do not the soldiers hourly ask it from me,
 " Sigh their own wrongs, and beg me to revenge 'em?
 " What hinders now but that I mount the throne
 " And make to that this purple youth my footstool?
 " The armies court me and my country's cause;
 " The injuries of Rome and Greece persuade me.
 " Shew but this Roman blood which he has drawn:
 " They'll make me Emp'rour whether I will or no.
 " Did not for less than this the latter Brutus,
 " Because he thought Rome wrong'd, in person head
 " Against his friend a black conspiracy,
 " And stab the majesty of all the world?

Theo. " Act as you please, I am within your pow'r.

Mar. " Did not the former Brutus for the crime
 " Of Sextus drive old Tarquin from his kingdom?
 " And shall this prince too, by permitting others
 " To act their wicked wills and lawless pleasures
 " Ravish from the empire its dear health,
 " Wellbeing, happiness, and ancient glory,
 " Go on in this dishonourable rest?
 " Shall he, I say, dream on while the starv'd troops
 " Lie cold and waking in the winter camp,
 " And like pin'd birds for want of sustenance
 " Feed on the haws and berries of the field?
 " Oh, temper, temper me, ye gracious gods!
 " Give to my hand forbearance, to my heart
 " Its constant loyalty—I would but shake him,
 " Rouse him a little from this death of honour,
 " And shew him what he should be.

[*Aside.*]

Theo. " You accuse me

" As if I were some monster most unheard of,
 " First as the ruin of the army, then
 " Of taking your commission; but by Heav'n
 " I swear, oh Marcian! this I never did,
 " Nor e'er intended it: nor say I this
 " To alter thy stern usage; for with what
 " Thou'lt said and done, and brought to my remembrance,
 " I grow already weary of my life.

Mar. " My Lord, I take your word—You do not know
 " The wounds which rage within your country's bowels,
 " The horrid usage of the suff'ring soldier:
 " But why will not our Theodosius know?
 " If you intrust the government to others
 " That act these crimes who but yourself's to blame?
 " Be witnesses ye gods! of my plain dealing,
 " Of Marcian's honesty, howe'er degraded.
 " I thank you for my banishment; but alas!
 " My loss is little to what soon will follow:
 " Reflect but on yourself and your own joys;
 " Let not this lethargy for ever hold you.
 " 'Twas rumour'd thro' the city that you lov'd,
 " That your espousals should be solemniz'd,
 " When on a sudden here you send your orders
 " That this bright favourite, the lov'd Eudisia,
 " Should lose her head.

Theo. " Oh heav'n and earth! what say'st thou?
 " That I have seal'd the death of my Eudisia?

Mar. " 'Tis your own hand and signet: yet I swear
 " Tho' you have giv'n to female hands your sway,
 " And therefore I as well as the whole army
 " For ever ought to curse all womankind,
 " Yet when the virgin came, as she was doom'd,
 " And on the scaffold, for that purpose rais'd,
 " Without the walls appear'd before the army—

Theo. " What! on a scaffold? Ha! before the army?

Mar. " How quickly was the tide of fury turn'd
 " To soft compassion and relenting tears! but when the axe
 " Sever'd the brightest beauty of the earth
 " From that fair body, had you heard the groan,
 " Which like a peal of distant thunder ran
 " Thro' all the armed host, you would have thought,
 " By the immediate darkness that fell round us,

" Whole Nature was concern'd at such a suff'ring,
 " And all the gods were angry.

Theo. " Oh Pulcheria!

" Cruel ambitious sifter, this must be
 " Thy doing! Oh, support me noble Marcian!
 " Now, now's the time, if thou dar'st strike: behold
 " I offer thee my breast; with my last breath
 " I'll thank thee too if now thou draw'st my blood.
 " Were I to live thy counsel should direct me;
 " But 't is too late——— [*He swoont.*

Mar. He faints! What, ho! there, Lucius!

Enter LUCIUS.

" My Lord the Emperour, Eudofia lives!
 " She's here, or will be in a minute, moment;
 " Quick as a thought she calls you to the temple.
 " Oh Lucius! help—— I've gone too far—— But see,
 " He breathes again—— Eudofia has awak'd him.

Theo. " Did you not name Eudofia?

Mar. " Yes, she lives;

" I did but feign the story of her death.
 " To find how near you plac'd her to your heart;
 " And may the gods rain all their plagues upon me
 " If ever I rebuke you thus again.
 " Yet 't is most certain that you sign'd her death,
 " Not knowing what the wise Pulcheria offer'd,
 " Who left it in my hand to startle you:
 " But by my life and fame I did not think
 " It would have touch'd your life. Oh pardon me
 " Dear Prince! my Lord, my Emp'rour, royal Master!
 " Droop not because I utter'd some rash words,
 " And was a madman—— By th' immortal gods
 " I love you as my soul: whate'er I said
 " My thoughts were otherwise; believe these tears,
 " Which do not use to flow, all shall be well:
 " I swear that there are seeds in that sweet temper
 " To atone for all the crimes in this bad age.

Theo. " I thank thee—— first for my Eudofia's life:
 " What but my love could have call'd back that life
 " Which thou hast made me hate? And oh! methought
 " 'T was hard, dear Marcian! very hard from thee,
 " From him I ever rev'renc'd as my father,
 " To hear so harsh a message—— But no more;

"We're friends—thy hand—Nay, if thou wilt not rise
 "And let me fold my arms about thy neck
 "I'll not believe thy love—In this forgive me:
 "First let me wed Eudofia and we'll out;
 "We will my general, and make amends
 "For all that's past—Glory and Arms ye call,
 "And Marcian leads me on—

Mar. "Let her not rest then—

"Espouse her straight; I'll strike you at a heat:
 "May this great humour get large growth within you,
 "And be encourag'd by th' embold'ning gods.
 "Oh what a fight will this be to the soldier,
 "To see me bring you dress'd in shining armour
 "To head the shouting squadrons!—Oh ye gods!
 "Methinks I hear the echoing cries of joy,
 "The sound of trumpets and the beat of drums—
 "I see each starving soldier bound from earth,
 "As if some god by miracle had rais'd him,
 "And with beholding you grow fat again.
 "Nothing but gazing eyes and op'ning mouths,
 "Cheeks red with joy and lifted hands about you;
 "Some wiping the glad tears that trickle down
 "With broken Ios, and with sobbing raptures
 "Crying To arms! he's come, our Emp'rour's come
 "To win the world!—Why, is not this far better
 "Than lolling in a lady's lap, and sleeping,
 "Fasting or praying? Come, come, you shall be merry;
 "And for Eudofia she is your's already:
 "Marcian has said it Sir; she shall be your's.
Theo. "Oh Marcian! oh my brother, father, all!
 "Thou best of friends, most faithful counsellor,
 "I'll find a match for thee too ere I rest,
 "To make thee love me; for when thou art with me
 "I'm strong and well, but when thou'rt gone I'm no-
 thing."

Enter ATHENAIUS *meeting* THEODOSIUS.

Theo. Alas, Eudofia! tell me what to say;
 For my full heart can scarce bring forth a word
 Of that which I have sworn to see perform'd.

Athen. I'm perfectly obedient to your pleasure.

Theo. Well then, I come to tell thee that Varanes
 Of all mankind is nearest to my heart:
 I love him, dear Eudofia! and to prove

That love on trial all my blood's too little:
 Ev'n thee, if I were sure to die this moment,
 (As Heav'n alone can tell how far my fate
 Is off) oh! thou my soul's most tender joy,
 With my last breath I would bequeath him thee.

Athen. Then you are pleas'd my Lord to yield me to him.

Theo. No, my Eudofia, no; I will not yield thee
 While I have life; for worlds I will not yield thee:
 Yet thus far I'm engag'd to let thee know
 He loves thee, Athenais, more than ever;
 He languishes, despairs, and dies, like me,
 And I have pass'd my word that he shall see thee.

Athen. Ah, Sir! what have you done against yourself
 And me?—

“Why will you trust me, who am now afraid
 “To trust myself?—why do you leave me naked
 “To an assault, who had made proof my virtue
 “With this sure guard never to see him more?”
 For oh! with trembling agonies I speak it,
 I cannot see a prince whom once I lov'd
 Bath'd in his grief, and gasping at my feet
 “In all the violent trances of despair,”
 Without a sorrow that perhaps may end me.

Theo. Oh, ye severer Pow'rs! too cruel Fate!
 Did ever love tread such a maze before?
 Yet, Athenais, still I trust thy virtue;
 But if thy bleeding heart cannot refrain,
 Give, give thyself away; yet still remember
 That moment Theodosius is no more——

[*Exit Theodosius.*]

Athen. Now glory, now, if ever thou didst work
 In woman's mind, assist me—“Oh, my heart!
 “Why dost thou throb as if thou wert a-breaking?
 “Down, down, I say; think on thy injuries,
 “Thy wrongs, thy wrongs—’Tis well my eyes are dry,
 “And all within my bosom now is still.”

Enter VARANES leaning on ARANTHES.

Ha! is this he? or is't Varanes' ghost?
 He looks as if he had bespoke his grave,
 Trembling and pale. I must not dare to view him;
 For oh! I feel his melancholy here,
 And fear I shall too soon partake his sickness.

Var. Thus to the angry gods offending mortals,
Made sensible by some severe affliction
How all their crimes are register'd in heav'n,
"In that nice court where no rash word escapes,
"But ev'n extravagant thoughts are all set down;"
Thus the poor penitents with fear approach
The rev'rend shrines, and thus for mercy bow; [*Kneels.*
Thus melting too they wash the hallow'd earth,
And groan to be forgiv'n——
Oh Empress! oh Eudofia! such you're now:
These are your titles, and I must not dare
Ever to call you Athenais more.

Athen. Rise, rise, my Lord, let me entreat you rise;
I will not hear you in that humble posture;
Rise, or I must withdraw——The world will blush
For you and me should it behold a prince
Sprung from immortal Cyrus on his knees
Before the daughter of a poor philosopher.

Var. 'Tis just, ye righteous gods! my doom is just;
Nor will I strive to deprecate her anger.
If possible I'll aggravate my crimes,
That she may rage till she has broke my heart;
For all I now desire——"and let the gods,
"Those cruel gods that join to my undoing,
"Be witnesses to this unnatural wish,"
Is to fall dead without a wound before her.

Athen. Oh, ye known sounds! but I must steel my soul.
[*Aside.*

"Methinks these robes, my Delia, are too heavy."

Var. Not worth a word, a look, or one regard!
"Is then the nature of my fault so heinous,
"That when I come to take my eternal leave
"You'll not vouchsafe to view me? This is scorn
"Which the fair soul of gentle Athenais
"Would ne'er have harbour'd——
"Oh! for the sake of him whom you ere long
"Shall hold as fast as now your wishes form him,"
Give me a patient hearing; for however
I talk of death, and seem to loathe my life,
I would delib'rate with my fate a while,
With snatching glances eye thee to the last,

Pause o'er a loss like that of Athenais,
And parley with my ruin.

Athen. Speak my Lord;
To hear you is the Emperour's command!
And for that cause I readily obey.

Var. The Emperour, the Emperour's command!
And for that cause she readily obeys!

I thank you Madam, that on any terms
You condescend to hear me——

Know then, Eudofia, ah, rather let me call thee
By the lov'd name of Athenais still!

"That name that I so often have invoc'd,
"And which was once auspicious to my vows,
"So oft' at midnight sigh'd among the groves
"The river's murmur and the echo's burden,
"Which ev'ry bird could sing and wind did bear;
"By that dear name I make this protestation,
"By all that's good on earth or blest'd in heav'n,"
I swear I love thee more, far more, than ever,
With conscious blushes too, here help me gods!
Help me to tell her, tho' to my confusion
And everlasting shame, yet I must tell her,
I lay the Persian crown before her feet.

Athen. My Lord I thank you, and t' express those thanks
As nobly as you offer 'em I return
The gift you make; nor will I now upbraid you
With the example of the Emperour;
Not but I know 'tis that that draws you on
Thus to descend beneath your majesty
And swell the daughter of a poor philosopher
With hopes of being great.

Var. Ah Madam! ah! you wrong me: by the gods
I had repented ere I knew the Emp'rour——

Athen. You find perhaps too late that Athenais,
However slighted for her birth and fortune,
Has something in her person and her virtue
Worth the regard of emperours themselves;
And to return the compliment you gave
My father, Leontine, that poor philosopher,
Whose utmost glory is to 'ave been your tutor,
I here protest by virtue and by glory,
I swear by Heav'n and all the Pow'rs divine,

Th' abandon'd daughter of that poor old man
Shall ne'er be seated on the throne of Cyrus.

Var. Oh, death to all my hopes! what, hast thou sworn
To turn me wild? Ah, cursed throne of Cyrus!
Would thou hadst been o'erturn'd and laid in dust,
His crown too thunderstruck, my father, all
The Persian race, like poor Darius ruin'd,
Blotted, and swept for ever from the world,
When first ambition blasted thy remembrance——

Athen. Oh Heav'n! I had forgot the base affront
Offer'd by this proud man; a wrong so great
It is remov'd beyond all hope of mērey:
He had design'd to bribe my father's virtue,
And by unlawful means——

Fly from my sight, lest I become a Fury,
And break those rules of temp'rance I propos'd:
Fly, fly, Varanes! fly this sacred place,
Where virtue and religion are profess'd;
"This city will not harbour infidels,
"Traitors to chastity, licentious princes:
"Begone I say; thou canst not here be safe:"
Fly to imperial libertines abroad;
In foreign courts thou'lt find a thousand beauties
That wilt comply for gold; for gold they'll weep,
For gold be fond as Athenais was,
And charm thee still as if they lov'd indeed.
"Thou'lt find enough companions too for riot,
"Luxuriant all, and royal as thyself,
"Tho' thy loud vices should resound to heav'n.
"Art thou not gone yet?

Var. "No, I am charm'd to hear you.
"Oh! from my soul I do confess myself
"The very blot of honour—I am more black
"Than thou in all thy heat of just revenge
"With all thy glorious eloquence can make me."

Athen. Away Varanes!

Var. Yes, Madam, I am going——
Nay, by the gods I do not ask thee pardon,
Nor while I live will I implore thy mercy;
But when I'm dead, if as thou dost return
With happy Theodosius from the temple,
If as thou go'st in triumph thro' the streets,

Thou chance to meet the cold Varanes there,
 Borne by his friends to his eternal home,
 Stop then, oh Athenais! and behold me;
 Say as thou hang'st about the Emp'rour's neck
 Alas! my Lord! this sight is worth our pity.
 If to those pitying words thou add a tear,
 Or give one parting groan——if possible,
 If the good gods will grant my soul the freedom,
 I'll leave my shroud, and wake from death to thank thee.

Athen. He shakes my resolution from the bottom;
 My bleeding heart too speaks in his behalf,
 And says my virtue has been too severe.

Var. Farewell, oh Empress! no Athenais now:
 I will not call thee by that tender name,
 Since cold despair begins to freeze my bosom,
 And all my pow'rs are now resolv'd on death.
 " 'Tis said that from my youth I have been rash,
 " Cholerick and hot; but let the gods now judge
 " By my last wish if ever patient man
 " Did calmly bear so great a loss as mine?"
 Since 't is so doom'd by Fate you must be wedded,
 For your own peace, when I am laid in earth,
 Forget that e'er Varanes had a being;
 Turn all your soul to Theodosius' bosom:
 Continue, gods! their days, and make them long;
 Lucina wait upon their fruitful Hymen,
 And many children beauteous as the mother,
 And pious as the father, make 'em smile.

Athen. Oh Heav'ns!

Var. Farewell——I'll trouble you no more;
 The malady that's lodg'd within grows stronger;
 I feel the shock of my approaching fate;
 My heart too trembles at his distant march;
 Nor can I utter more if you should ask me.
 Thy arm Arantes——Oh, farewell for ever!——

Athen. Varanes, stay; and ere you go for ever
 Let me unfold my heart.

Var. O Athenais!
 What further cruelty hast thou in store
 To add to what I suffer?

Athen. Since 't is doom'd

That we must part, let's part as lovers should,
As those that have lov'd long and loved well.

Var. Art thou so good, oh! Athenais, oh!

Athen. First, from my soul I pity and forgive you;
I pardon you that hasty little error,
Which yet has been the cause of both our ruins:
And let this sorrow witness for my heart
How eagerly I wish it had not been;
And since I cannot keep it take it all;
Take all the love, oh Prince! I ever bore you;
"Or if 'tis possible I'll give you more:
"Your noble carriage forces this confession,
"I rage, I burn, I bleed, I die, for love!
"I am distracted with this world of passion.

Var. "Gods! cruel gods! take notice I forgive you.

Athen. "Alas! my Lord, my weaker tender sex
"Has not your manly patience, cannot curb
"This fury in; therefore I let it loose;
"Spite of my rigid duty I will speak
"With all the dearness of a dying lover."
Farewell, most lovely and most lov'd of men——
Why comes this dying paleness o'er thy face?
Why wander thus thy eyes? why dost thou bend,
As if the fatal weight of death were on thee?
Var. Speak yet a little more; for by the gods,
And as I prize those blessed happy moments,
I swear, oh Athenais! all is well:
Oh, never better!

Athen. I doubt thee, dear Varanes!
Yet if thou dy'st I shall not long be from thee.
Once more farewell, and take these last embraces.
Oh, I could crush him to my heart! Farewell;
And as a dying pledge of my last love
Take this, which all thy pray'rs could never charm.
What have I done? Oh! lead me, lead me, Delia!
Ah prince, farewell! angels protect and guard thee!

Var. Turn back, oh Athenais! and behold me;
Hear my last words, and then farewell for ever.
Thou hast undone me more by this confession:
You say, you swear, you love me more than ever;
Yet I must see you marry'd to another:
Can there be any plague or hell like this!

Oh Athenais! whither shall I turn me?
 You've brought me back to life; but oh! what life?
 To a life more terrible than thousand deaths.
 Like one that had been bury'd in a trance
 With racking starts he wakes, and gazes round,
 Forc'd by despair his whirling limbs to wound,
 "And bellow like a spirit under ground,"
 Still urg'd by Fate to turn, to toss and rave,
 Tormented, dash'd, and broken, in the grave. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

ATHENAIS *dress'd in imperial robes, and crown'd; a table with a bowl of poison, DELIA attending.*

ATHENAIS.

A Midnight marriage! Must I to the temple
 Thus at the murd'rer's hour? 'Tis wondrous strange!
 But so, thou say'st, my father has commanded,
 And that's a mighty reason.

Delia. The Emp'rour, in compassion to the prince,
 Who would perhaps fly to extravagance
 If he in publick should resolve to espouse you,
 Contriv'd by this close marriage to deceive him.

Athen. 'Tis well; retire.

"Go fetch thy lute, and sing those lines I gave thee." [Exit Delia.]

So, now I am alone; yet my soul shakes;
 For where this dreadful draught may carry me
 The Heav'ns can only tell; yet I'm resolv'd
 To drink it off in spite of consequence.
 Whisper him, oh some angel! what I'm doing:
 By sympathy of soul let him too tremble
 To hear my wondrous faith, my wondrous love,
 "Whose spirit not content with an ovation
 "Of ling'ring fate, with triumph thus resolv'd,
 "Thus in the rapid chariot of the soul,
 "To mount and dare as never woman dar'd. [Drinks.]
 "'Tis done—haste, Delia, haste—come, bring thy lute,
 "And sing my wastage to immortal joys.
 "Methinks I can't but smile at my own bravery;

" Thus from my lowest fortune rais'd to empire,
 " Crown'd and adorn'd, worshipp'd by half the earth,
 " While a young monarch dies for my embraces,
 " Yet now to wave the glories of the world"—
 Oh my Varanes ! tho' my birth's unequal,
 My virtue sure has richly recompens'd,
 And quite outgone example !

SONG.

" Ah, cruel bloody fair!
 " What canst thou now do more ?
 " Alas ! 'tis all too late
 " Philander to restore !
 " Why should the heav'nly pow'rs persuade
 " Poor mortals to believe
 " That they guard us here
 " And reward us there,
 " Yet all our joys deceive ?

" Her poignard then she took
 " And held it in her hand,
 " And with a dying look
 " Cry'd, Thus I Fate command :
 " Philander, ah, my love ! I come
 " To meet thy shade below ;
 " Ah, I come ! she cry'd,
 " With a wound so wide
 " There needs no second blow.

" In purple waves her blood
 " Ran streaming down the floor,
 " Unmov'd she saw the floor,
 " And blest'd her dying hour :
 " Philander ! ah Philander ! still
 " The bleeding Phillis cry'd ;
 " She wept a while
 " And she forc'd a smile,
 " Then clos'd her eyes and dy'd."

Enter PULCHERIA.

Pulch. How fares my dear Eudofia ? Ha ! thou look'st,
 Or else the tapers cheat my sight, like one
 That's fitter for thy tomb than Cæsar's bed :
 A fatal sorrow dims thy shaded eyes,
 And in despite of all thy ornaments
 Thou seem'st to me the ghost of Athenais.

Athen. And what's the punishment, my dear Pulcheria !

What torments are allotted those sad spirits
 Who groaning with the burden of despair
 No longer will endure the cares of life,
 But boldly set themselves at liberty,
 " Thro' the dark caves of death to wander on,
 " Like wilder'd travellers without a guide,
 " Eternal rovers in the gloomy maze,
 " Where scarce the twilight of an infant moon,
 " By a faint glimmer check'ring thro' the trees,
 " Reflects to dismal view the walking ghosts,
 " And never hope to reach the blessed fields?"

Pulch. No more o' that; Atticus shall resolve thee:
 But see, he waits thee from the Emperour;
 Thy father too attends.

Enter LEONTINE, ATTICUS, &c.

Leon. Come Athenais—Ha! what now, in tears?
 Oh, fall of honour! but no more. I charge thee,
 I charge thee, as thou ever hop'st my blessing
 Or fear'st my curse, to banish from thy soul
 All thoughts, if possible the memory,
 Of that ungrateful prince that has undone thee.
 Attend me to the temple on this instant
 To make the Emp'rour thine, this night to wed him,
 " And lie within his arms."

Athen. Yes, Sir, I'll go——
 Let me but dry my eyes and I will go;
 Eudofia, this unhappy bride, shall go:
 Thus like a victim crown'd and doom'd to bleed,
 I'll wait you to the altar, wed the Emp'rour,
 " And if he pleases lie within his arms."

Leon. Thou art my child again.

Athen. But do not, Sir, imagine any charms
 Or threat'nings shall compel me
 Never to think of poor Varanes more;
 No, my Varanes! no——
 While I have breath I will remember thee;
 'To thee alone I will my thoughts confine,
 And all my meditations shall be thine:
 " The image of thy woes my soul shall fill,
 " Fate and my end, and thy remembrance still.
 As in some poplar shade the nightingale
 " With piercing moans does her lost young bewail,

"Which the rough hind observing as they lay
 "Warm in their downy nest had stol'n away;
 "But she in mournful sounds does still complain,
 "Sings all the night, tho' all her songs are vain,
 "And still renews her miserable strain."

}

Yes, my Varanes! till my death comes on
 Shall sad Eudofia thy dear loss bemoan.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter VARANES.

Var. 'Tis night, dead night, and weary Nature lies
 So fast as if she never were to rise;
 No breath of wind now whispers thro' the trees,
 No noise at land nor murmur in the seas;
 "Lean wolves forget to howl at night's pale noon,
 "No wakeful dogs bark at the silent moon,
 "Nor bay the ghosts that glide with horror by
 "To view the caverns where their bodies lie;
 "The ravens perch and no presages give,
 "Nor to the windows of the dying cleave;
 "The owls forget to scream; no midnight sound
 "Calls drowsy Echo from the hollow ground;
 "In vaults the walking fires extinguish'd lie,
 "The stars, heav'n's sentry, wink, and seem to die."
 Such universal silence spreads below
 Thro' the vast shades where I am doom'd to go.
 Nor shall I need a violence to wound,
 The storm is here that drives me on the ground;
 Sure means to make the soul and body part,
 A burning fever and a broken heart.
 What, ho, Arantes!

Enter ARANTES.

I sent thee to th' apartment of Athenais——
 "I sent thee," did I not, "to be admitted?"

Aran. You did my Lord; but oh!
 I fear to give you an account.

Var. Alas,
 Arantes! I am got on t'other side
 Of this bad world, and now am past all fear.
 Oh ye avenging gods! is there a plague
 Among your hoarded bolts and heaps of vengeance
 Beyond the mighty loss of Athenais?
 'Tis contradiction—Speak then, speak Arantes,
 For all misfortune if compar'd with that
 Will make Varanes smile——

Aran. My Lord, the Empress
Crown'd and adorn'd with the imperial robes;
At this dead time of night, with silent pomp,
As they design'd from all to keep it secret,
But chiefly sure from you; I say the Empress
Is now conducted by the general,
Atticus, and her father, to the temple,
There to espouse the Emp'rour Theodosius.

Kar. Say'st thou? Is't certain? Ha!

Aran. Most certain Sir! I saw them in procession.

Var. Give me thy sword. Malicious Fate! Oh Fortune!
Oh giddy Chance! Oh turn of love and greatness!
Marry'd—she has kept her promise now indeed;
And oh! her pointed fame and nice revenge
Have reach'd their end. No, my Arantes, no;
I will not stay the lazy execution
Of a slow fever. Give me thy hand, and swear
By all the love and duty that thou ow'st me
T' observe the last commands that I shall give thee:
Stir not against my purpose, as thou fear'st
My anger and disdain; nor dare t' oppose me
With troublesome unnecessary formal reasons,
For what my thought has doom'd my hand shall seal.
I charge thee hold it stedfast to my heart,
Fix'd as the fate that throws me on the point.
Tho' I have liv'd a Persian, I will fall
As fair, as fearless, and as full resolv'd,
As any Greek or Roman of them all.

Aran. What you command is terrible, but sacred.
And to atone for this too cruel duty,
My Lord, I'll follow you——

Var. I charge thee not;
But when I am dead take the attending slaves,
And bear me with my blood distilling down
Straight to the temple: lay me, oh Arantes!
Lay my cold corse at Athenais' feet,
And say, oh why! why do my eyes run o'er?
Say with my latest gasp I groan'd for pardon.
Just here, my friend; hold fast, and fix the sword;
I feel the art'ry where the lifeblood lies;
It heaves against the point—Now, oh ye gods!
If for the greatly wretched you have room
Prepare my place; for dauntless lo I come:

The force of love thus makes the mortal wound,
And Athenais sends me to the ground. [Kills himself.]

SCENE, the outward part of the temple.

Enter PULCHERIA and JULIA at one door, MARCIAN and LUCIUS at another.

Pulch. "Look, Julia, see the pensive Marcian comes:
" 'Tis to my wish; I must no longer lose him,
" Lest he should leave the court indeed. He looks
" As if some mighty secret work'd within him
" And labour'd for a vent—Inspire me woman!
" That what my soul desires above the world
" May seem impos'd and forc'd on my affections.

Luc. "I say she loves you, and she stays to hear it
" From your own mouth—Now in the name
" Of all the gods at once my Lord, why are you silent?
" Take heed Sir, mark your opportunity,
" For if the woman lays it in your way
" And you o'ersee it she is lost for ever.

Mar. "Madam, I come to take my eternal leave;
" Your doom has banish'd me, and I obey.
" The court and I shake hands, and now we part,
" Never to see each other more; the court
" Where I was born and bred a gentleman,
" No more, till your illustrious bounty rais'd me,
" And drew the earthborn vapour to the clouds:
" But as the gods ordain'd it I have lost,
" I know not how, thro' ignorance, your grace,
" And now the exhalation of my glory
" Is quite consum'd and vanish'd into air.

Pulch. "Proceed Sir.

Mar. "Yet let those gods that doom'd me to displeasure
" Be witnesses how much I honour you—— [you
" Thus worshipping, I swear by your bright self
" I leave this infamous court with more content
" Than fools and flatterers seek it; but oh Heav'n!
" I cannot go if still your hate pursues me;
" Yes, I declare it is impossible.
" To go to banishment without your pardon.

Pulch. "You have it Marcian: is there ought beside
" That you would speak, for I am free to hear.

Mar. "Since I shall never see you more, what hinders
" But my last words should here protest the truth?

“ Know then, imperial princeſs, matchleſs woman !
 “ Since firſt you caſt your eyes upon my meaneſs,
 “ Ev’n till you rais’d me to my envy’d height,
 “ I have in ſecret lov’d you——

Pulch. “ Is this Marcian ?

Mar. “ You frown, but I am ſtill prepar’d for all :

“ I ſay I lov’d you, and I love you ſtill,
 “ More than my life, and equal to my glory.
 “ Methinks the warring ſpirit that inſpires
 “ This frame, the very Genius of old Rome,
 “ That makes me talk without the fear of death,
 “ And drives my daring ſoul to acts of honour,
 “ Flames in your eyes ; our thoughts too are akin,
 “ Ambitious, fierce, and burn alike for glory.
 “ Now by the gods I lov’d you in your fury,
 “ In all the thunder that quite riv’d my hopes ;
 “ I lov’d you moſt ev’n when you did deſtroy me.
 “ Madam, I’ve ſpoke my heart, and could ſay more,
 “ But that I ſee it grieves you ; your high blood
 “ Frets at the arrogance and ſaucy pride
 “ Of this bold vagabond—May the gods forgive me—
 “ Farewell—a worthier gen’ral may ſucceed me,
 “ But none more faithful to the Emp’rour’s intereſt
 “ Than him you’re pleas’d to call the traitor Marcian.

Pulch. “ Come back ; you’ve ſubtily play’d your part
 “ Forfirſt the Emp’rour, whom you lately ſchool’d, [indeed ;
 “ Reſtores you your commiſſion ; next commands you,
 “ As you’re a ſubject, not to leave the court :
 “ Next, but oh Heav’n ! which way ſhall I expreſs
 “ His cruel pleaſure ! he that is ſo mild
 “ In all things elſe, yet obſtinate in this,
 “ Spite of my tears, my birth, and my diſdain,
 “ Commands me, as I dread his high diſpleaſure,
 “ Oh Marcian ! to receive you as my huſband.

Mar. “ Ha Lucius ! what does my Fate intend ?

Luc. “ Purſue her Sir ; ’t is as I ſaid : ſhe yields,
 “ And rages that you follow her no faſter.

Pulch. “ Is then, at laſt, my great authority
 “ And my truſted pow’r declin’d to this ?
 “ Yet, oh my Fate ! what way can I avoid it ?
 “ He charg’d me ſtraight to wait him to the temple,
 “ And there reſolve, oh Marcian ! on this marriage.
 “ Now, gen’rous foldier, as you’re truly noble,

" Oh help me forth, lost in this labyrinth ;
 " Help me to loose this more than Gordian knot,
 " And make me and yourself for ever happy.
Mar. " Madam, I'll speak as briefly as I can,
 " And as a foldier ought: the only way
 " To help this knot is yet to tie it faster.
 " Since then the Emp'rour has resolv'd you mine,
 " For which I will for ever thank the gods,
 " And make this holyday thro'out my life,
 " I take him at his word, and claim his promise ;
 " The empire of the world shall not redeem you.
 " Nay, weep not Madam ; tho' my outside's rough,
 " Yet by those eyes your soldier has a heart
 " Compassionate and tender as a virgin's ;
 " Ev'n now it bleeds to see those falling sorrows ;
 " Perhaps this grief may move the Emperour
 " To a repentance : come then to the trial,
 " For by my arms, my life, and dearer honour,
 " If you go back when giv'n me by his hand
 " In distant wars my fate I will deplore,
 " And Marcian's name shall ne'er be heard of more.

SCENE, the temple.

THEODOSIUS, ATHENAI, ATTICUS *joining their hands*—
 MARCIAN, PULCHERIA, LUCIUS, JULIA, DELIA, &c.
 LEONTINE.

Attic. The more than Gordian knot is ty'd
 Which Death's strong arm shall ne'er divide,
 For when to bliss ye waded are
 Your spirits shall be wedded there.
 Waters are lost and fires will die,
 But love alone can Fate defy.

Enter ARANTHES with the body of VARANES.

Aran. Where is the Empress? where shall I find Eudofia?
 By Fate I'm sent to tell that cruel beauty
 She has robb'd the world of Fame: her eyes have giv'n
 A blast to the big blossom of the war;
 Behold him there nipp'd in his flow'ry morn,
 Compell'd to break his promise of a day,
 A day that conquest would have made her boast:
 Behold her laurel wither'd to the root,
 Canker'd and kill'd by Athenais' scorn.

Athen. Dead, dead, Varanes!

Theo. "Oh ye eternal Pow'rs
 "That guide the world! why do you shock our reason
 "With acts like these, that lay our thoughts in dust?
 "Forgive me, Heav'n, this start, or elevate
 "Imagination more, and make it nothing."
 Alas, alas! Varanes! But speak, Arantes,
 The manner of his fate. "Groans choke my words—
 "But speak, and we will answer thee with tears."

Aran. His fever would, no doubt, by this have done
 What some few minutes past his sword perform'd.
 He heard from me your progress to the temple,
 How you design'd at midnight to deceive him
 By a clandestine marriage: but my Lord,
 Had you beheld his racks at my relation,
 Or had your empress seen him in those torments,
 When from his dying eyes swol'n to the brim
 The big round drops roll'd down his manly face,
 When from his hollow'd breast a murmur'ing crowd
 Of groans rush'd forth, and echo'd All is well;
 Then had you seen him, oh ye cruel gods!
 Rush on the sword I held against his breast,
 And dye it to the hilts with these last words——
 Bear me to Athenais——

Athen. Give me way my Lord;
 I have most strictly kept my promise with you:
 I am your bride, and you can ask no more:
 Or if you did I'm past the pow'r to give—
 But here, oh here! on his cold bloody breast
 Thus let me breathe my last.

Theo. Oh Empress! what, what can this transport mean?
 Are these our nuptials, these my promis'd joys?

Athen. Forgive me, Sir, this last respect I pay
 These sad remains—And oh, thou mighty spirit!
 If yet thou art not mingled with the stars,
 Look down and hear the wretched Athenais,
 When thou shalt know before I gave consent
 To this indecent marriage I had taken
 Into my veins a cold and deadly draught,
 "Which soon would render me, alas! unfit
 "For the warm joys of an imperial lover,
 "And make me ever thine, yet keep my word
 "With Theodosius," wilt thou not forgive me?

Theo. Poison'd, to free thee from the Emperour!
 Oh Athenais! thou hast done a deed
 That tears my heart! "What have I done against thee
 "That thou shouldst brand me thus with infamy
 "And everlasting shame? thou might'st have made
 "Thy choice without this cruel act of death:
 "I left thee to thy will, and in requital
 "Thou hast murder'd all my fame."

Athen. Oh, pardon me!
 I lay my dying body at your feet,
 And beg, my Lord, with my last sighs intreat you,
 T' impute the fault, if 'tis a fault, to love,
 And the ingratitude of Athenais,
 To her too cruel stars. Remember, too,
 I begg'd you would not let me see the prince,
 Presaging what has happen'd; yet my word
 As to our nuptials was inviolable.

Theo. Ha! she is going!—"see her languishing eyes
 "Draw in their beams!" the sleep of death is on her.

Athen. "Farewell, my Lord." Alas, alas! Varanes!
 T' embrace thee now is not immodesty,
 Or if it were I think my bleeding heart
 Would make me criminal in death to clasp thee,
 "Break all the tender niceties of honour
 "To fold thee thus, and warm thee into life,
 "For oh, what man like him could woman move!"
 Oh prince belov'd! oh spirit most divine!
 Thus by my death I give thee all my love,
 And seal my soul and body ever thine——

[Dies.]

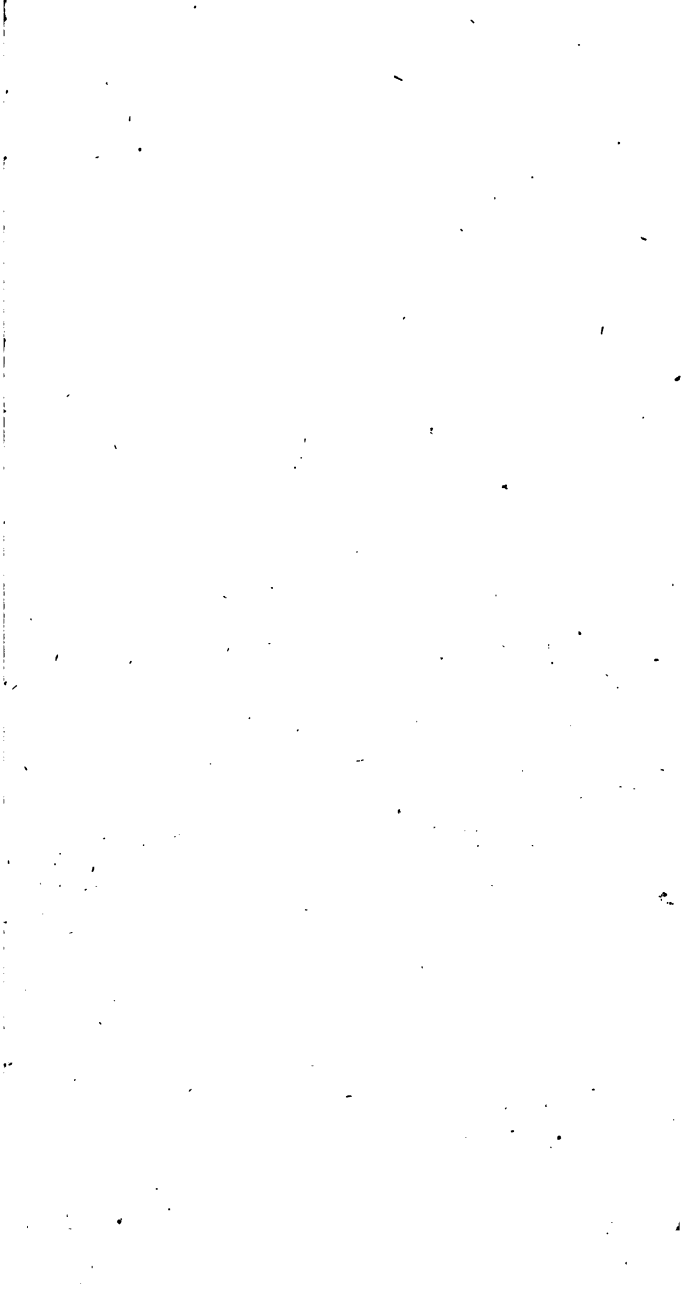
Theo. Oh Marcian! oh Pulcheria! did not the Pow'r
 Whom we adore plant all his thunderbolts
 Against selfmurd'ers I would perish too;
 But as I am I swear to leave the empire.
 To thee, my sister, I bequeath the world,
 And yet a gift more great, the gallant Marcian:
 On then, my friend, now shew thy Roman spirit!
 As to her sex fair Athenais was
 Be thou to thine a pattern of true honour:
 Thus we'll atone for all the present crimes,
 That yet it may be said in aftertimes
 No age with such examples could compare,
 So great, so good, so virtuous, and so fair.

[Exeunt.]

EPILOGUE.

*THrice happy they that never wrote before ;
 How pleas'd and bold they quit the safer shore !
 Like some new captain of the city bands
 That with big looks in Finsbury commands,
 Swell'd with huge ale he cries, Beat, beat, the drum ;
 Pox'o' the French king ! Uds-bud ! let him come ;
 Give me ten thousand redcoats and alloo !
 We'll firke his Cregui and his Conde too.
 Thus the young scribblers mankind's sense disdain,
 For ignorance is sure to make 'em vain ;
 But far from vanity or dang'rous pride
 Our cautious Poet courts you to his side ;
 For why should you be scorn'd to whom are due
 All the good days that ever authors knew ?
 If ever gay 't is you that make 'em fine ;
 The pit and boxes make the poet dine,
 And he scarce drinks but of the critick's wine.
 Old writers should not for vainglory strive,
 But like old mistresses think how to thrive,
 Be fond of ev'ry thing their keepers say,
 At least till they can live without a play ;
 Like one who knows the trade and has been bit,
 She dotes and fawns upon her wealthy cit,
 And swears she loves him merely for his wit.
 Another, more untaught than a Walloon,
 Antick and ugly, like an old baboon,
 She swears is an accomplish'd beau-garcon ;
 Turns with all winds, and sails with all desires ;
 All hearts in city, town, and court, she fires,
 Young callow lords, lean knights, and driv'ling squires.
 She in resistless flatt'ry finds her ends,
 Gives thanks for fools, and makes ye all her friends.
 So should wise poets sooth an awkward age,
 For they are prostitutes upon the stage.
 To stand on points were foolish and illbred
 As for a lady to be nice in bed ;
 Your wills alone must their performance measure,
 And you may turn 'em ev'ry way for pleasure.*

From the APOLLO PRESS,
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Roberts del.

Published for the Belle Breugh Theatre Decr. 20. 1776.

Thomson sculp.

M^{rs} HARTLEY in the Character of LADY JANE GREY

LADY JANE GREY.

A TRAGEDY. BY NICHOLAS ROWE.

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt-Book, by permission of the Managers,

BY MR. HOPKINS PROMPTER.

CHARACTERISTICS.

And shall we tamely yield ourselves to bondage—Bow down before these holy purple tyrants—And bid 'em tread upon our slavish necks—No; let this faithful freeborn English hand—Dig my grave in liberty and honour—Thou' I found but one more thus resolv'd—That next man and I would die together—Ha! Pembroke! that is a bar which thwarts my way—His fiery temper must be met with soft and supple arts—With crouching courtesy and holy'd words—Noble Pembroke!—By the honour of my name I swear—I know not one of our English peers—Whom I would chuse for best friend like Pembroke! NORTHUMB.
I know not what my secret soul presages—But something seems to whisper me within—That we have been too hasty. For myself—I wish this matter had been yet delay'd. SUFFOLK.
If the sword be drawn one must fall—Oh Pembroke! I have borne thee true unfeign'd affection—As sure as thou hast wrong'd me I am come—In tenderness of friendship to preserve thee—And fence thee from destruction with my life—To save the man whom my soul raves from death—Give me arms! I will preserve my country—Ev'n in her own despite—Here I will grow the bulwark of my queen—Nor shall the hand of Violence profane thee—till my breast have borne a thousand wounds—Till this torn mangled body sink at once—heap of purple ruin at thy feet.

GUILFORD.

Oh! generous youth!—What can a heart stubborn and fierce like mine—Return to all thy sweetness—Yet I wou'd—I wou'd be grateful—My temper, disdaining Reason and her laws—Like all thou canst imagine wild and furious—Now drives me headlong on, now whisks me back—And hurls my unstable sitting soul—To ev'ry mad extreme—Give me vengeance—Give me to tell that soft deceiver Guilford—Thus, traitor, hast thou done—'Tis 'tis truth—I see his honest heart—His virtues flash—They break at once on my astonished soul—My sad repenting heart!—Oh! let me fly; bear me thou swift impatience—And lodge me in my faithful Guilford's arms—That I may snatch thee from the greedy eye—That I may warm his gentle heart with joy—And talk to him of life, of life and reason—This wondrous pair—Let these be happy—While I resign to them my share of happiness—Contented still to want what they enjoy—And singly to be wretched—Blasted the hand that struck my Guilford.

PEMBROKE.

I have not dreamt away my thoughtless hours—I hear and see thro' reasonable organs—Where passion has no part—I advis'd—To break thro' all engagements made with heretics—And keep my faith with such a miscreant crew—While I hold the seal no pardon passes—nor heretics and traitors. Death or the mass.

GARDINER.

I will give up all my share of greatness—And live in low obscurity for ever—To see thee rais'd, thou darling of my heart—And fix'd upon a throne—Curs'd be my fatal counsels, curs'd my tongue—That pleaded for thy ruin, and persuaded—Thy guiltless feet to tread the paths of greatness!—My child!—I have undone thee!

DUCH. SUFFOLK.

A cheerless gleam I bring—My heart is cold within me, ev'ry sense—Is dead to joy—My whole heart for wretched England bleeds—Oh! save me from this sorrow, this misfortune—Which in the shape of gorgeous Greatness comes—To crown and make a wretch of me for ever—Heaven!—In mercy spare my country—At ev'ry danger which invades our England—My cold heart kindles at the great occasion—And cou'd be more than man in her defence—I will die—For that eternal truth my faith is fix'd on—And that dear native land which gave me birth—England!—What must we lose for that—All I ask is—To drive this land from tyranny and from Rome—For myself—if I could form a wish for Heaven—grant—It should have been to rid me of this crown—Thou, allknowing Pow'r I beseege me—If e'er ambitious guilty fires have warmed me—If e'er my heart inclin'd to pride, to pow'r—Or join'd in being a queen. I took the sceptre—To save this land, thy temple, and thy altars—Yes, England, yes, my country, I wou'd save thee. LADY JANE GREY.



EDINBURG:

At the Apollo Press, by THE MARTINS, for Bell, LONDON, 1782.



TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

MADAM,

A Princess of the same royal blood to which you are so closely and so happily allied presumes to throw herself at the feet of your Royal Highness for protection. The character of that excellent lady, as it is delivered down to us in history, is very near the same with the picture I have endeavoured to draw of her; and if in the poetical colouring I have aim'd at heightening and improving some of the features, it was only to make her more worthy of those illustrious hands to which I always intended to present her.

As the British nation in general is infinitely indebted to your Royal Highness, so every particular person amongst us ought to contribute, according to their several capacities and abilities, towards the discharging that publick obligation.

We are your debtors, Madam, for the preference you gave us in chusing to wear the British rather than the imperial crown; for giving the best daughter to our king and the best wife to our prince. It is to your Royal Highness we owe the security that shall be delivered down to our children's children by a most hopeful and beautiful as well as a numerous royal issue. These are the bonds of our civil duty; but your Royal Highness has laid us under others yet more sacred and engaging, I mean those of religion: you are not only the brightest ornament but the patroness and defender of our holy faith.

Nor is it Britain alone but the world, but the present and all succeeding ages, who shall bless your royal name for the greatest example that can be given of a disinterested piety and unshaken constancy.

This is what we may certainly reckon amongst the benefits your Royal Highness has conferred upon us; tho' at the same time how partial soever we may be to ourselves we ought not to believe you declined the first crown of Europe in regard to Britain only: no, Madam, it is in justice to your Royal Highness that we must confess you had more excellent motives for so great an action as that was, since you did it in obedience to the dictates of reason and conscience, for the sake of true religion, and for the honour of God. All things that are great have been offered to you, and all things that are good and happy, as well in this world as a better, shall become the reward of such exalted virtue and piety. The blessings of our nation, the prayers of our church, with the faithful service of all good men, shall wait upon your Royal Highness as long as you live; and whenever, for the punishment of this land, you shall be taken from us, your sacred name shall be dear to remembrance, and almighty God, who alone is able, shall bestow on you the fulness of recompense.

Amongst the several offerings of duty which are made to you here be graciously pleased to accept of this unworthy trifle, which is with the greatest respect and lowest submission presented to your Royal Highness by,

Madam,

your Royal Highness's

most obedient, most devoted, and

most faithful humble servant,

N. ROWE.

A ſſ

PREFACE.

THOUGH I have very little inclination to write Prefaces before works of this nature, yet upon this particular occasion I cannot but think myself obliged to give some account of this Play, as well in justice to myself as to a very learned and ingenious gentleman, my friend, who is dead. The person I mean was Mr. Smith of Christ-church Oxon; one whose character I could with great pleasure enter into if it was not already very well known to the world. As I had the happiness to be intimately acquainted with him, he often told me that he designed writing a tragedy upon the story of Lady Jane Grey; and if he had lived I should never have thought of meddling with it myself; but as he died without doing it in the beginning of last summer, I resolved to undertake it: and indeed the hopes I had of receiving some considerable assistances from the papers he left behind him were one of the principal motives that induced me to go about it. These papers were in the hands of Mr. Duckett, to whom my friend Mr. Thomas Burnet was so kind as to write and procure them for me. The least return I can make to those gentlemen is this publick acknowledgment of their great civility on this occasion. I must confess before those papers came to my hand I had entirely formed the design or fable of my own play, and when I came to look them over I found it was different from that which Mr. Smith intended; the plan of his being drawn after that which is in print of Mr. Banks; at least I thought so by what I could pick out of his papers. To say the truth I was a good deal surprised and disappointed at the sight of them. I hoped to have met with great part of the play written to my hand, or at least the whole of the design regularly drawn out: instead of that I found the quantity of about two quires of paper written over in odd pieces, blotted, interlined, and confused. What was contained in them in general was loose hints of sentiments and short obscure sketches of scenes; but how they were to be applied, or in what order they were to be ranged, I could not by any diligence of mine (and I looked them very carefully over more than once) come to understand. One scene there was, and one only, that seemed pretty near perfect, in which Lord Gullford singly persuades Lady Jane to take the crown; from that I borrowed all that I could, and inserted it in my own third act. But indeed the manner and turn of his fable was so different from mine that I could not take above five-and-twenty or thirty lines at the most; and even in those I was obliged to make some alteration. I should have been very glad to have come into a partnership of reputation with so fine a writer as Mr. Smith was, but in truth his hints were so short and dark (many of them marked even in short-hand) that they were of little use or service to me. They might have served as indexes to his own memory, and he might have formed a play out of them, but I dare say nobody else could. In one part of his design he seems to differ from Mr. Banks, whose tale he generally designed to follow, since I observed in many of those short sketches of scenes he had introduced Queen Mary. He seemed to intend her character pitiful, and inclining to mercy, but urged on to cruelty by the rage and bloody dispositions of Bonner and Gardiner. This hint I had likewise taken from the late Bishop of Salisbury's History of the Reformation, who lays, and I believe very justly, the horrible cruelties that were acted at that time rather to the charge of that persecuting spirit by which the clergy were then animated than to the queen's own natural disposition.

Many people believed, or at least said, that Mr. Smith left a play very near entire behind him. All that I am sorry for is that it was not so in fact: I should have made no scruple of taking three, four, or even the whole five acts from him; but then I hope I should have had the honesty to let the world know they were his, and not take another man's reputation to myself.

This is what I thought necessary to say as well on my own account as in regard to the memory of my friend.

For the Play, such as it is, I leave it to prosper as it can: I have resolved never to trouble the world with any publick apologies for my writings of this kind, as much as I have been provoked to it. I shall turn this my youngest child out into the world with no other provision than a saying which I remember to have seen before one of Mrs. Behn's,

• *Tal men infant, prend la fortune.*

PROLOGUE.

SENT BY AN UNKNOWN HAND.

WHEN waking terrors rouse the guilty breast,
 And fatal visions break the murderer's rest,
 When Vengeance does Ambition's fate decree,
 And tyrants bleed to set whole nations free,
 Tho' the Muse saddens each distressed scene,
 Unmov'd is ev'ry breast and ev'ry face serene,
 The mournful lines no tender heart subdue,
 Compassion is to suff'ring goodness due.
 The poet your attention begs once more
 To atone for characters here drawn before ;
 No royal mistress sighs thro' ev'ry page,
 And breathes her dying sorrows on the stage ;
 No lovely fair, by soft persuasion won,
 Lays down the load of life when honour's gone :
 Nobly to bear the changes of our state,
 To stand unmov'd against the storms of Fate,
 A brave contempt of life and grandeur lost,
 Such glorious toils a female name can boast.
 Our Author draws not Beauty's heav'nly smile
 To invite our wishes and our hearts beguile ;
 No soft enchantments languish in her eye,
 No blossoms fade nor sick'ning roses die ;
 A nobler passion ev'ry breast must move
 Than youthful raptures or the joys of love ;
 A mind unchang'd, superiour to a crown,
 Bravely defies the angry tyrant's frown,
 The same if fortune sinks or mounts on high,
 Or if the world's extended ruins lie ;
 With gen'rous scorn she lays the sceptre down ;
 Great souls shine brightest by misfortunes shewn ;
 With patient courage she sustains the blow,
 And triumphs o'er variety of woe.
 Tho' ev'ry scene the sad distress is new ;
 How well feign'd life does represent the true !
 Unhappy age ! who views the bloody stain
 But must with tears record Maria's reign,
 When zeal by doctrine flatter'd lawless will,
 Instructed by Religion's voice to kill ?
 Ye British fair, lament in silent woe,
 Let ev'ry eye with tender pity flow ;
 The lovely form thro' falling drops will seem
 Like flow'ry shadows of the silver stream :
 Thus beauty, heav'n's sweet ornament, shall prove
 Enrich'd by virtue as ador'd by love.
 Forget your charms, fond woman's dear delight,
 The sop will languish here another night :
 No conquest from dissembling smiles we fear,
 She only kills who wounds us with a tear.

PROLOGUE.

*To-night the noblest subject swells our scene,
 A heroine, a martyr, and a queen;
 And tho' the poet dares not boast his art,
 The very theme shall something great impart
 To warm the gen'rous soul and touch the tender heart.
 To you, fair judges, we the cause submit,
 Your eyes shall tell us how the tale is writ:
 If your soft pity waits upon our woe,
 If silent tears for suff'ring virtue flow,
 Your grief the Muse's labour shall confess,
 The lively passions and the just distress.
 Oh! could our Author's pencil justly paint
 Such as she was in life the beauteous saint,
 Boldly your strict attention might we claim,
 And bid you mark and copy out the dame.
 No wand'ring glance one wanton thought confess,
 No guilty wish inflam'd her spotless breast;
 The only love that warm'd her blooming youth
 Was husband, England, liberty, and truth:
 For these she fell while with too weak a hand
 She strove to save a blind ungrateful land.
 But thus the secret laws of Fate ordain;
 William's great band was doom'd to break that chain,
 And end the hopes of Rome's tyrannick reign.
 For ever as the circling years return
 Ye grateful Britons crown the hero's urn,
 To his just care you ev'ry blessing owe,
 Which or his own or following reigns bestow:
 Tho' his hard fate a father's name deny'd,
 To you a father be that lost supply'd.
 Then while you view the royal lines increase,
 And count the pledges of your future peace,
 From this great stock while still new glories come,
 Conquest abroad and liberty at home,
 While you behold the beautiful and brave,
 Bright princesses to grace you kings to save,
 Enjoy the gift, but bless the hand that gave.*

Dramatis Personae.

MEN.

	<i>Drury-Lane.</i>	<i>Covent-Garden.</i>
Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND,	Mr. Burton.	Mr. Hull.
Duke of SUFFOLK,	Mr. Bransby.	Mr. Fearon.
Lord GUILFORD DUDLEY,	Mr. Reddish.	Mr. Lewis.
Earl of PEMBROKE,	Mr. Holland.	Mr. Bensley.
Earl of SUSSEX,	Mr. Mozeen.	Mr. L'Estrange.
GARDINER Bishop of Win- chester,	Mr. Havard.	Mr. Clarke.
Sir JOHN GATES,	Mr. Ackman.	Mr. Booth.
Lieut. of the Tower,	Mr. Fox.	Mr. Chaplin.

WOMEN.

Duchess of SUFFOLK,	Mrs. Bennet.	Mrs. Hull.
Lady JANE GREY,	Mrs. Yates.	Mrs. Hartley.
<i>Lords of the Council, Gentlemen, Guards, Women, and Attendants.</i>		

LADY JANE GREY †.

ACT I.

SCENE, *the court.*

*Enter the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND, Duke of SUFFOLK,
and Sir JOHN GATES.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

'TIS all in vain; Heav'n has requir'd its pledge,
And he must die.

Suf. Is there an honest heart

That loves our England does not mourn for Edward?

The Genius of our isle is shook with sorrow,

"He bows his venerable head with pain,

"And labours with the sickness of his lord:"

Religion melts in ev'ry holy eye;

"All comfortless, afflicted, and forlorn,

"She sits on earth and weeps upon her cros,

"Weary of man and his detested ways;

"Ev'n now she seems to meditate her flight,

"And waft her angels to the thrones above."

North. Ay, there, my Lord, you touch our heaviest loss;

With him our holy faith is doom'd to suffer;

With him our church shall veil her sacred front

"That late from heaps of Gothick ruins rose

"In her first native simple majesty:

"The toil of saints and price of martyrs' blood

"Shall fail with Edward, and again old Rome

"Shall spread her banners, and her monkish host,"

Pride, Ignorance, and Rapine, shall return;

Blind Bloody Zeal and cruel Priestly Pow'r

Shall scourge the land for ten dark ages more.

Sir J. G. Is there no help in all the healing art,

No potent juice or drug, to save a life

So precious, and prevent a nation's fate?

North. What has been left untry'd that art could do?

"The hoary wrinkled leech has watch'd and toil'd,

† The lines distinguished by inverted commas are omitted in the representation.

"Try'd ev'ry health-restoring herb and gum,
 "And weary'd out his painful skill in vain,
 "Close, like a dragon folded in his den,
 "Some secret venom preys upon his heart,
 "A stubborn and unconquerable flame
 "Creeps in his veins and drinks the streams of life;"
 His youthful sinews are unstrung, cold sweats
 And deadly paleness fit upon his visage,
 And ev'ry gasp we look shall be his last.

Sir J. G. Doubt not your Graces but the Popish faction
 Will at this juncture urge their utmost force :
 All on the Princess Mary turn their eyes,
 Well hoping she shall build again their altars,
 And bring their idol worship back in triumph.

North. "Good Heav'n, ordain some better fate for Eng-
Suf. "What better can we hope if she should reign? [laud!
 "I know her well, a blinded zealot is she,
 "A gloomy nature, fullen and severe,
 "Nurtur'd by proud presuming Romish priests,
 "Taught to believe they only cannot err
 "Because they cannot err; bred up in scorn
 "Of reason and the whole lay world; instructed
 "To hate whoe'er dissent from what they teach,
 "To purge the world from heresy by blood,
 "To massacre a nation, and believe it
 "An act wellpleasing to the Lord of mercy.
 "These are thy gods oh Rome! and this thy faith."

North. And shall we tamely yield ourselves to bondage,
 Bow down before these holy purple tyrants,
 And bid 'em tread upon our slavish necks?
 No; let this faithful freeborn English hand
 First dig my grave in liberty and honour;
 And tho' I found but one more thus resolv'd
 That honest man and I would die together.

Suf. Doubt not there are ten thousand and ten thousand
 To own a cause so just.

Sir J. G. The list I gave
 Into your Grace's hand last night declares
 My pow'r and friends at full. [To Northumb.

North. Be it your care,
 Good Sir John Gates, to see your friends appointed

And ready for th' occasion : haste this instant ;
Lose not a moment's time.

Sir J. G. I go my Lord. [*Exit Sir J. Gates.*]

North. Your Grace's princely daughter, Lady Jane,
Is she yet come to court?

Suf. Not yet arriv'd,
But with the soonest I expect her here :
I know her duty to the dying King,
Join'd with my strict commands to hasten hither,
Will bring her on the wing.

North. Beseech your Grace
To speed another messenger to press her,
For on her happy presence all our counsels
Depend and take their fate.

Suf. Upon the instant
Your Grace shall be obey'd : I go to summon her. [*Ex. Suf.*]

North. What trivial influences hold dominion
O'er wise mens' counsels and the fate of empire !

" The greatest schemes that human wit can forge

" Or bold ambition dares to put in practice

" Depend upon our husbanding a moment

" And the light lasting of a woman's will,

" As if the Lord of nature should delight

" To hang this pond'rous globe upon a hair

" And bid it dance before a breath of wind."

She must be here and lodg'd in Guilford's arms

Ere Edward dies, or all we've done is marr'd.

Ha ! Pembroke ! that's a bar which thwarts my way !

His fiery temper brooks not opposition,

And must be met with soft and supple arts,

" With crouching courtesy and honey'd words,"

-Such as assuage the fierce and bend the strong.

Enter the Earl of PEMBROKE.

Good-morrow, noble Pembroke ! we have staid

The meeting of the Council for your presence.

Pemb. For mine my Lord ! you mock your servant sure

To say that I am wanted, where yourself,

The great Alcides of our state, is present.

Whatever dangers menace prince or people

Our great Northumberland is arm'd to meet 'em :

The ablest head and firmest heart you bear,

Nor need a second in the glorious task,

Equal yourself to all the toils of empire.

North. No; as I honour virtue I have try'd
And know my strength too well! nor can the voice
Of friendly flattery, like your's, deceive me.
I know my temper liable to passions,
And all the frailties common to our nature,
"Blind to events, too easy of persuasion,
"And often, too, too often, have I err'd:"
Much therefore have I need of some good man,
Some wise and honest heart, whose friendly aid
Might guide my treading thro' our present dangers;
And by the honour of my name I swear
I know not one of all our English peers
Whom I wou'd chuse for that best friend like Pembroke!

Pemb. "What shall I answer to a trust so noble,
"This prodigality of praise and honour?"
Were not your Grace too generous of soul
To speak a language diff'ring from your heart,
How might I think you could not mean this goodness
To one whom his illfortune has ordain'd
The rival of your son?

North. No more; I scorn a thought
So much below the dignity of virtue.
'Tis true I look on Guilford like a father,
Lean to his side, and see but half his failings;
But on a point like this, when equal merit
Stands forth to make its bold appeal to honour,
And calls to have the balance held in justice,
Away with all the fondnesses of nature!
I judge of Pembroke and my son alike.

Pemb. I ask no more to bind me to your service.

North. The realm is now at hazard, and bold factions
Threaten change, tumult, and disastrous days.
These fears drive out the gentler thoughts of joy,
Of courtship, and of love. Grant, Heav'n! the state
To fix in peace and safety once again,
Then speak your passion to the princely maid,
And fair success attend you. For myself,
My voice shall go as far for you, my Lord,
As for my son, and beauty be the umpire.
But now a heavier matter calls upon us;
The King with life just lab'ring, and I fear
The Council grow impatient at our stay.

Pemb. One moment's pause and I attend your Grace.

[*Exit North.*]

Old Winchester cries to me oft' Beware
Of proud Northumberland. The testy prelate,
Froward with age, with disappointed hopes,
And zealous for old Rome, rails on the duke,
Suspecting him to favour the new teachers;
Yet ev'n in that if I judge right he errs:
But were it so, what are these monkish quarrels,
These wordy wars of proud illmanner'd schoolmen,
To us and our lay interest? Let 'em rail
And worry one another at their pleasure.
This duke of late by many worthy offices
Has sought my friendship; and, yet more, his son,
The noblest youth our England has to boast of,
The gentlest nature and the bravest spirit,
Has made me long the partner of his breast:
"Nay, when he found, in spite of the resistance
"My struggling heart had made to do him justice,
"That I was grown his rival, he strove hard,
"And would not turn me forth from out his bosom,
"But call'd me still his friend." And see! he comes.

Enter Lord GUILFORD.

Oh Guilford! just as thou wert ent'ring here
My thought was running all thy virtues over,
And wond'ring how thy soul cou'd chuse a partner
So much unlike itself.

Guil. How cou'd my tongue
Take pleasure and be lavish in thy praise!
How could I speak thy nobleness of nature,
Thy open manly heart, thy courage, constancy,
And inborn truth, unknowing to dissemble!
Thou art the man in whom my soul delights,
In whom next Heav'n I trust.

Pemb. Oh gen'rous youth!
What can a heart stubborn and fierce like mine
Return to all thy sweetness?—Yet I wou'd,
I wou'd be grateful—Oh my cruel fortune!
Wou'd I had never seen her, never cast
Mine eyes on Suffolk's daughter!

Guil. So wou'd I!
Since 't was my fate to see and love her first.

Pemb. Oh ! why shou'd she, that universal goodness,
Like light a common blessing to the world,
Rise like a comet fatal to our friendship,
And threaten it with ruin ?

Guil. Heav'n forbid !

But tell me, Pembroke, is it not in virtue
To arm against this proud imperious passion ?
" Does holy Friendship dwell so near to Envy,
" She could not bear to see another happy"
If blind mistaken Chance and partial Beauty
Should join to favour Guilford ?

Pemb. Name it not ;
My fiery spirits kindle at the thought,
And hurry me to rage..

Guil. And yet I think
I shou'd not murmur were thy lot to prosper
And mine to be refus'd ; tho' sure the loss
Wou'd wound me to the heart.

Pemb. Ha ! couldst thou bear it ?
And yet perhaps thou might'st : thy gentle temper
Is form'd with passions mix'd in due proportion,
Where no one overbears nor plays the tyrant,
" But join in nature's bus'ness and thy happiness ;"
While mine, disdaining Reason and her laws,
Like all thou canst imagine wild and furious,
Now drives me headlong on, now whirls me back,
And hurls my unstable flitting soul
To ev'ry mad extreme. Then pity me
And let my weakness stand——

Enter Sir JOHN GATES.

Sir J. G. The Lords of Council
Wait with impatience——

Pemb. I attend their pleasure :
" This only, and no more then. Whatsoever
Fortune decrees, still let us call to mind
Our friendship and our honour : and since love
Condemns us to be rivals for one prize,
Let us contend, as friends and brave men ought,
With openness and justice to each other,
That he who wins the fair one to his arms
May take her as the crown of great desert,

And if the wretched lofer does repine
His own heart and the world may all condemn him.

[*Ex. Pemb.*

Guil. How cross the ways of life lie! While we think
We travel on direct in one high road,
And have our journey's end oppos'd in view,
A thousand thwarting paths break in upon us
To puzzle and perplex our wand'ring steps:
Love, friendship, hatred, in their turns mislead us,
And ev'ry passion has its separate int'rest.
Where is that piercing foresight can unfold
Where all this mazy error will have end,
And tell the doom reserv'd for me and Pembroke?
"There is but one end certain, that is——death:
"Yet ev'n that certainty is still uncertain,
"For of these sev'ral tracks which lie before us
"We know that one leads certainly to death,
"But know not which that one is." 'Tis in vain
This blind divining; let me think no more on't.
And see, the mistress of our fate appear!

Enter Lady JANE GREY. Attendants.

Hail, princely maid! who with auspicious beauty
Cheer'st ev'ry drooping heart in this sad place,
Who like the silver regent of the night
Lift'st up thy sacred beams upon the land
To bid the gloom look gay, dispel our horrors,
And make us less lament the setting sun.

L. J. G. Yes, Guilford, well dost thou compare my
To the faint comfort of the waning moon; [*presence*
Like her cold orb a cheerless gleam I bring;
"Silence and heaviness of heart, with dews
"To dress the face of nature all in tears."
But say, how fares the King?

Guil. He lives as yet,
But ev'ry moment cuts away a hope,
Adds to our fears, and gives the infant saint
Great prospect of his op'ning heav'n.

L. J. G. "Descend ye choirs of angels to receive him,
"Tune your melodious harps to some high strain,
"And waft him upwards with a song of triumph:
"A purer soul, and one more like yourselves,
"Ne'er enter'd at the golden gates of bliss."

B

Oh Guilford! what remains for wretched England
 When he our guardian angel shall forsake us,
 "For whose dear sake Heav'n spar'd a guilty land,
 "And scatter'd not its plagues while Edward reign'd?"

Guil. I own my heart bleeds inward at the thought,
 "And rising horrors crowd the op'ning scene."
 And yet forgive me, thou my native country,
 Thou land of liberty, thou nurse of heroes,
 Forgive me, if in spite of all thy dangers
 New springs of pleasure flow within my bosom,
 When thus 't is giv'n me to behold those eyes,
 Thus gaze, and wonder "how excelling Nature
 "Can give each day new patterns of her skill,
 "And yet at once surpass 'em."

L. J. G. Oh, vain flattery!
 "Harsh and illfounding ever to my ear,
 "But on a day like this the raven's note
 "Strikes on my sense more sweetly." But no more,
 "I charge thee touch th' ungrateful theme no more:"
 Lead me to pay my duty to the King,
 To wet his pale cold hand with these last tears,
 And share the blessings of his parting breath.

Guil. Were I like dying Edward, sure a touch
 Of this dear hand would kindle life anew.
 But I obey, I dread that gath'ring frown;
 And oh! whene'er my bosom swells with passion,
 And my full heart is pain'd with ardent love,
 Allow me but to look on you and sigh;
 'Tis all the humble joy that Guilford asks. [purpose

L. J. G. Still wilt thou frame thy speech to this vain
 "When the wan King of Terrors stalks before us,"
 When universal ruin gathers round,
 And no escape is left us? Are we not
 Like wretches in a storm, whom ev'ry moment
 The greedy deep is gaping to devour?
 "Around us see the pale despairing crew
 "Wring their sad hands and give their labour o'er;"
 The hope of life has ev'ry heart forsook,
 And horror sits on each distracted look;
 "One solemn thought of death does all employ,
 "And cancels like a dream delight and joy;

"One sorrow streams from all their weeping eyes,
 "And one consenting voice for mercy cries;"
 Trembling they dread just Heav'n's avenging pow'r,
 Mourn their past lives, and wait the fatal hour. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE continues.

*Enter the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND and the Duke of
 SUFFOLK.*

NORTHUMBERLAND.

YET then be cheer'd my heart amidst thy mourning:
 "Tho' Fate hang heavy o'er us, tho' pale fear
 "And wild distraction sit on ev'ry face,"
 Tho' never day of grief was known like this,
 Let me rejoice, and bless the hallow'd light
 Whose beams auspicious shine upon our union,
 And bid me call the noble Suffolk brother.

Suf. I know not what my secret soul presages,
 But something seems to whisper me within
 That we have been too hasty. "For myself,
 "I wish this matter had been yet delay'd,
 "That we had waited some more blessed time,
 "Some better day with happier omens hallow'd,
 "For Love to kindle up his holy flame;
 "But you, my noble brother, wou'd prevail,
 "And I have yielded to you."

North. Doubt not any thing,
 Nor hold the hour unlucky that good Heav'n,
 "Who softens the corrections of his hand,
 "And mixes still a comfort with afflictions,"
 Has giv'n to-day a blessing in our children
 To wipe away our tears for dying Edward.

Suf. In that I trust. Good angels be our guard,
 And make my fears prove vain! But see! my wife!
 With her your son, the gen'rous Guilford, comes:
 She has inform'd him of our present purpose.

Enter the Duchess of SUFFOLK and Lord GUILFORD.

L. Guil. How shall I speak the fulness of my heart?

What shall I say to bless you for this goodness?
 Oh gracious princess! but my life is your's,
 And all the bus'ness of my years to come
 Is to attend with humblest duty on you,
 And pay my vow'd obedience at your feet.

Duch. Suf. Yes, noble youth! I share in all thy joys,
 "In all the joys which this sad day can give.
 "The dear delight I have to call thee son
 "Comes like a cordial to my drooping spirits,
 "It broods with gentle warmth upon my bosom,
 "And melts that frost of death which hung about me."
 But haste! inform my daughter of our pleasure;
 "Let thy tongue put on all its pleasing eloquence;
 "Instruct thy love to speak of comfort to her,
 "To sooth her griefs and cheer the mourning maid."

North. All desolate and drown'd in flowing tears
 By Edward's bed the pious princess sits,
 "Fast from her lifted eyes the pearly drops
 "Fall trickling o'er her cheek, while holy ardour
 "And fervent zeal pour forth her lab'ring soul,"
 And ev'ry sigh is wing'd with pray'rs so potent
 As strive with Heav'n to save her dying Lord.

Duch. Suf. From the first early days of infant life
 A gentle band of friendship grew betwixt 'em,
 And while our royal uncle Henry reign'd,
 As brother and as sister bred together,
 Beneath one common parent's care they liv'd.

North. A wondrous sympathy of souls conspir'd
 To form the sacred union. "Lady Jane
 "Of all his royal blood was still the dearest;
 "In ev'ry innocent delight they shar'd;
 "They sung, and danc'd, and sat, and walk'd, together;
 "Nay, in the graver bus'ness of his youth,
 "When books and learning call'd him from his sports,
 "Ev'n there the princely maid was his companion:
 "She left the shining court to share his toil,
 "To turn with him the grave historian's page,
 "And taste the rapture of the poet's song,
 "To search the Latin and the Grecian stores,
 "And wonder at the mighty minds of old."

Enter LADY JANE GREY weeping.

L. J. G. Wot thou not break my heart!—

Suf. Alas! what mean'st thou?

Guil. Oh speak!

Duch. Suf. How fares the King?

North. Say, is he dead?

L. J. G. The saints and angels have him.

Duch. Suf. When I left him

He seem'd a little cheer'd, "just as you enter'd"---

L. J. G. As I approach'd to kneel and pay my duty

He rais'd his feeble eyes, and faintly smiling,

Are you then come? he cry'd; I only liv'd

To bid farewell to thee my gentle cousin,

"To speak a few short words to thee and die."

With that he prest my hand, and oh!--he said

When I am gone do thou be good to England,

Keep to that faith in which we both were bred,

And to the end be constant. More I wou'd,

But cannot---There his falt'ring spirits fail'd,

"And turning ev'ry thought from earth at once

"To that best place where all his hopes were fix'd,

"Earnest he pray'd---Merciful, great Defender!

"Preserve thy holy altars undefil'd,

"Protect this land from bloody men and idols,

"Save my poor people from the yoke of Rome,

"And take thy painful servant to thy mercy;"

Then sinking on his pillow, with a sigh

He breath'd his innocent and faithful soul

Into his hands who gave it.

Guil. "Crowns of glory,

"Such as the brightest angels wear, be on him,

"Peace guard his ashes here, and paradise,

"With all its endless bliss, be open to him."

North. Our grief be on his grave. Our present duty

Enjoins to see his last commands obey'd.

I hold it fit his death be not made known

To any but our friends. To-morrow early

The Council shall assemble at the Tower:

Mean-while I beg your Grace wou'd straight inform

[To the Duchess of Suffolk.

Your princely daughter of our resolution:

Our common int'rest in that happy tie

Demands our swiftest care to see it finish'd.

Duch. Suff. My Lord, you have determin'd well. Lord
Be it your task to speak at large our purpose. [Guilford,
Daughter, receive this Lord as one whom I,
Your father and his own, ordain your husband:
What more concerns our will and your obedience
We leave you to receive from him at leisure.
[*Exeunt Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, and Duke of Northumberland.*

Guil. Wot thou not spare a moment from thy sorrows,
“And bid these bubbling streams forbear to flow?
“Wot thou not give one interval to joy,”
One little pause, while humbly I unfold
The happiest tale my tongue was ever blest with?

L. J. G. My heart is cold within me; ev'ry sense
Is dead to joy: but I will hear thee Guilford,
“Nay, I must hear thee, such is her command.
“Whom early duty taught me still t' obey.”
Yet oh! forgive me if to all the story,
Tho' eloquence divine attend thy speaking,
“Tho' ev'ry Muse and ev'ry Grace do crown thee,”
Forgive me if I cannot better answer
Than weeping---thus, and thus---

Guil. If I offend thee
Let me be dumb for ever; “let not life
“Inform these breathing organs of my voice
“If any sound from me disturb thy quiet.
“What is my peace or happiness to thine?”
No; tho' our noble parents had decreed,
And urg'd high reasons which import the state,
This night to give thee to my faithful arms,
My fairest bride, my only earthly bliss——

L. J. G. How? Guilford! on this night?

Guil. This happy night;
Yet if thou art resolv'd to cross my fate,
If this my utmost wish shall give thee pain,
Now rather let the stroke of death fall on me,
And stretch me out a lifeless corse before thee;
“Let me be swept away with things forgotten,
“Be huddled up in some obscure blind grave,
“Ere thou shouldst say my love has made thee wretched,
“Or drop one single tear for Guilford's sake.”

L. J. G. Alas! I have too much of death already,

And want not thine to furnish out new horror.
 " Oh! dreadful thought! if thou wert dead indeed
 " What hope were left me then! Yes, I will own,
 " Spite of the blush that burns my maiden cheek,
 " My heart has fondly lean'd towards thee long :
 " Thy sweetness, virtue, and unblemish'd youth,
 " Have won a place for thee within my bosom ;
 " And if my eyes look coldly on thee now,
 " And shun thy love on this disastrous day,
 " It is because I would not deal so hardly
 " To give thee sighs for all thy faithful vows,
 " And pay thy tenderness with nought but tears ;
 " And yet 't is all I have.

Guil. " I ask no more : "

Let me but call thee mine, confirm that hope
 To charm the doubts which vex my anxious soul,
 For all the rest do thou allot it for me,
 And at thy pleasure portion out my blessings.
 " My eyes shall learn to smile or weep from thine,
 " Nor will I think of joy while thou art sad.
 " Nay, couldst thou be so cruel to command it,
 " I will forego a bridegroom's sacred right,
 " And sleep far from thee on th' unwholesome earth,
 " Where damps arise and whistling winds blow loud,
 " Then when the day returns come drooping to thee,
 " My locks still drizzling with the dews of night,
 " And cheer my heart with thee as with the morning.

L. J. G. " Say, wot thou consecrate the night to sorrow,
 " And give up ev'ry sense to solemn sadness?
 " Wot thou in watching waste the tedious hours,
 " Sit silently and careful by my side,
 " Lift to the toiling clocks the cricket's cry,
 " And ev'ry melancholy midnight noise?
 " Say, wot thou banish pleasure and delight?
 " Wot thou forget that ever we have lov'd,
 " And only now and then let fall a tear
 " To mourn for Edward's loss and England's fate?

Guil. " Unweary'd still I will attend thy woes,
 " And be a very faithful partner to thee.
 " Near thee I will complain in sighs as numberless
 " As murmurs breathing in the leafy grove ;
 " My eyes shall mix their falling drops with thine,

" Constant as never-ceasing waters roll
 " That purl and gurgle o'er their sands for ever:
 " The sun shall see my grief thro' all his course,
 " And when night comes sad Philomel, who plains
 " From starry vesper to the rosy dawn,
 " Shall cease to tune her lamentable song
 " Ere I give o'er to weep and mourn with thee.

L. J. G. " Here then I take thee to my heart for ever,
 [*Giving her hand.*

" The dear companion of my future days:
 " Whatever Providence allots for each
 " Be that the common portion of us both:
 " Share all the griefs of thy unhappy Jane,
 " But if good Heav'n has any joys in store
 " Let them be all thy own."

Guil. Thou wondrous goodness!
 " Heav'n gives too much at once in giving thee;
 " And by the common course of things below,
 " Where each delight is temper'd with affliction,
 " Some evil terrible and unforeseen
 " Must sure ensue to poise the scale against
 " This vast profusion of exceeding pleasure;
 " But be it so, let it be death and ruin,
 " On any terms I take thee.

L. J. G. Trust our fate
 " To him whose gracious wisdom guides our ways,
 " And makes what we think evil turn to good."
 Permit me now to leave thee and retire;
 I'll summon all my reason and my duty
 To sooth this storm within, and frame my heart
 To yield obedience to my noble parents.

Guil. Good angels minister their comforts to thee!
 And oh! " if, as my fond belief wou'd hope,
 " If any word of mine be gracious to thee,"
 I beg thee, I conjure thee, drive away
 Those murd'rous thoughts of grief that kill thy quiet,
 Restore thy gentle bosom's native peace,
 Lift up the light of gladness in thy eyes,
 And cheer my heaviness with one dear smile.

L. J. G. Yes, Guilford, I will study to forget
 All that the royal Edward has been to me,
 " How we have lov'd ev'n from our very cradles."

My private loss no longer will I mourn,
But ev'ry tender thought to thee shall turn;
With patience I'll submit to Heav'n's decree,
And what I lost in Edward find in thee.
But oh! when I revolve what ruins wait
Our sinking altars and the falling state,
"When I consider what my native land
"Expected from her pious sov'reign's hand,
"How form'd he was to save her from distress,
"A king to govern and a saint to bless,"
New sorrow to my lab'ring breast succeeds,
And my whole heart for wretched England bleeds.

[Exit Lady Jane Grey.]

Guil. My heart sinks in me at her soft complaining,
And ev'ry moving accent that she breathes
Resolves my courage, slackens my tough nerves,
And melts me down to infancy and tears:
"My fancy palls, and takes distaste at pleasure;
"My soul grows out of tune, it loathes the world,
"Sickens at all the noise and folly of it,
"And I cou'd set me down in some dull shade
"Where lonely Contemplation keeps her cave
"And dwells with hoary hermits, there forget myself,
"There fix my stupid eyes upon the earth,
"And muse away an age in deepest melancholy."

Enter PEMBROKE.

Pemb. Edward is dead; so said the great Northumber-
As now he shot along by me in haste: [land
He press'd my hand, and in a whisper begg'd me
To guard the secret carefully as life
Till some few hours should pass, for much hung on it.
Much may indeed hang on it. See, my Guilford!
My friend! [Speaking to him.

Guil. Ha! Pembroke?

[Starting.

Pemb. Wherefore dost thou start?

Why sits that wild disorder on thy visage,
Somewhat that looks like passions strange to thee,
The paleness of surprise and ghastly fear?
Since I have known thee first, and call'd thee friend,
I never saw thee so unlike thyself,
So chang'd upon a sudden.

Guil. How! so chang'd!

Pemb. So to my eye thou seem'st.

Guil. The King is dead.

Pemb. I learn'd it from thy father
Just as I enter'd here. But say, cou'd that,
A fate which ev'ry moment we expected,
Distract thy thought or shock thy temper thus?

Guil. Oh Pembroke! 'tis in vain to hide from thee,
For thou hast look'd into my artless bosom,
And seen at once the hurry of my soul.
'Tis true thy coming struck me with surprise.
I have a thought—but wherefore said I one?
I have a thousand thoughts all up in arms,
“ Like pop'lous towns disturb'd at dead of night,
“ That mix'd in darkness bustle to and fro,
“ As if their bus'ness were to make confusion.”

Pemb. Then sure our better angels call'd me hither,
For this is friendship's hour and friendship's office,
To come when counsel and when help is wanting,
To share the pain of ev'ry gnawing care,
To speak of comfort in the time of trouble,
To reach a hand and save thee from adversity.

Guil. And wot thou be a friend to me indeed?
And while I lay my bosom bare before thee
“ Wot thou deal tenderly, and let thy hand
“ Pass gently over ev'ry painful part?”
Wot thou with patience hear, and judge with temper?
And if perchance thou meet with something harsh,
Somewhat to rouse thy rage and grate thy soul,
Wot thou be master of thyself and bear it?

Pemb. Away with all this needless preparation!
Thou know'st thou art so dear, so sacred to me,
That I can never think thee an offender.
If it were so that I indeed must judge thee,
I should take part with thee against myself,
“ And call thy fault a virtue.”

Guil. But suppose
The thought were somewhat that concern'd our love.

Pemb. No more; thou know'st we spoke of that to-day,
And on what terms we left it. 'Tis a subject
Of which, if possible, I wou'd not think;
I beg that we may mention it no more.

Guil. Can we not speak of it with temper?

Pemb. No,

Thou know'st I cannot; therefore prithee spare it.

Guil. Oh! cou'd the secret I wou'd tell thee sleep,
And the world never know it, my fond tongue
Shou'd cease from speaking ere I wou'd unfold it,
Or vex thy peace with an officious tale;
But since, howe'er ungrateful to thy ear,
It must be told thee once, hear it from me.

Pemb. Speak then, and ease the doubts that shock my soul.

Guil. Suppose thy Guilford's better stars prevail,
And crown his love—

Pemb. Say not suppose; 'tis done:
Seek not for vain excuse or soft'ning words:
Thou hast prevaricated with thy friend,
By underhand contrivances undone me,
And while my open nature trusted in thee
Thou hast stepp'd in between me and my hopes,
And ravish'd from me all my soul held dear:
Thou hast betray'd me—

Guil. How! betray'd thee, Pembroke?

Pemb. Yes, falsely, like a traitor.

Guil. Have a care.

Pemb. But think not I will bear the foul play from thee;
There was but this which I could ne'er forgive.
My soul is up in arms, my injur'd honour,
Impatient of the wrong, calls for revenge;
And tho' I love thee—fondly—

Guil. Hear me yet,
And Pembroke shall acquit me to himself;
Hear while I tell how Fortune dealt between us,
And gave the yielding beauty to my arms——

Pemb. What, hear it! stand and listen to thy triumph!
Thou think'st me tame indeed. No, hold I charge thee,
Lest I forget that ever we were friends,
Lest in the rage of disappointed love
I rush at once and tear thee for thy falsehood.

Guil. Thou warn'st me well; and I were rash as thou art
To trust the secret sum of all my happiness
With one not master of himself. Farewell. [*Going.*]

Pemb. Ha! art thou going? think not thus to part,
Nor leave me on the rack of this uncertainty.

Guil. What wouldst thou further?

Pemb. Tell it to me all;
 Say thou art marry'd, say thou hast possess'd her,
 And rioted in vast excess of bliss,
 That I may curse myself, and thee, and her.
 Come, tell me how thou didst supplant thy friend;
 How didst thou look with that betraying face,
 And smiling plot my ruin?

Guil. Give me way:
 When thou art better temper'd I may tell thee,
 And vindicate at full my love and friendship.

Pemb. And dost thou hope to shun me then, thou traitor?
 No, I will have it now, this moment, from thee,
 "Or drag the secret out from thy false heart.

Guil. "Away, thou madman! I wou'd talk to winds,
 "And reason with the rude tempestuous surge,
 "Sooner than hold discourse with rage like thine.

Pemb. "Tell it, or by my injur'd love I swear"
 [*Laying his hand upon his sword.*
 I'll stab the lurking treason in thy heart.

Guil. Ha! stay thee there, nor let thy frantick hand
 [*Stopping him.*
 Unsheathe thy weapon. If the sword be drawn,
 If once we meet on terms like those, farewell
 To ev'ry thought of friendship; one must fall.

Pemb. Curse on thy friendship! I would break the band.

Guil. That as you please—Beside, this place is sacred,
 And wo' not be profan'd with brawls and outrage.
 You know I dare be found on any summons.

Pemb. 'Tis well. My vengeance shall not loiter long:
 Henceforward let the thoughts of our past lives
 Be turn'd to deadly and remorseless hate.
 Here I give up the empty name of Friend,
 Renounce all gentleness, all commerce with thee,
 To death defy thee as my mortal foe,
 And when we meet again may swift destruction
 Rid me of thee or rid me of myself. [*Exit Pembroke.*

Guil. The fate I ever fear'd is fall'n upon me,
 And long ago my boding heart divin'd
 A breach like this from his ungovern'd rage.
 Oh Pembroke! thou hast done me much injustice,
 For I have borne thee true unfeign'd affection:
 'Tis past, and thou art lost to me for ever.

" Love is or ought to be our greatest bliss;
 " Since ev'ry other joy, how dear soever,
 " Gives way to that, and we leave all for Love:
 " At the imperious tyrant's lordly call
 " In spite of reason and restraint we come,
 " Leave kindred parents and our native home :
 " The trembling maid with all her fears he charms,
 " And pulls her from her weeping mother's arms ;
 " He laughs at all her leagues, and in proud scorn
 " Commands the bands of friendship to be torn,
 " Disdains a partner should partake his throne,
 " But reigns unbounded, lawless, and alone. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE, *the Tower.**Enter PEMBROKE and GARDINER.*

GARDINER.

NAY, by the rood, my Lord, you were to blame
 To let a hair-brain'd passion be your guide,
 And hurry you into such mad extremes.
 Marry, you might have made much worthy profit
 By patient hearing; the unthinking Lord
 Had brought forth ev'ry secret of his soul;
 Then when you were the master of his bosom
 That was the time to use him with contempt,
 And turn his friendship back upon his hands.

Pemb. Thou talk'st as if a madman could be wise.
 Oh Winchester! thy hoary frozen age
 Can never guess my pain, can never know
 The burning transports of untam'd desire.
 " I tell thee, rev'rend Lord, to that one bliss,
 " To the enjoyment of that lovely maid,
 " As to their centre, I had drawn each hope
 " And ev'ry wish my furious soul cou'd form;
 " Still with regard to that my brain forethought,
 " And fashion'd ev'ry action of my life :
 " Then to be robb'd at once, and unsuspecting
 " Be dash'd in all the height of expectation,
 " It was not to be borne."

Gar. Have you not heard of what has happen'd since?

Pemb. I have not had a minute's peace of mind,
A moment's pause, to rest from rage, or think.

Gar. Learn it from me then ; but ere I speak
I warn you to be master of yourself.

Tho' as you know they have confin'd me long,
Gra'mercy to their goodness ! 'pris'ner here,

Yet as I am allow'd to walk at large

Within the Tower, and hold free speech with any,
I have not dreamt away my thoughtless hours

" Without good heed to these our righteous rulers : "

To prove this true this morn a trusty spy

Has brought me word that yester ev'ning late,

In spite of all the grief for Edward's death,

Your friends were marry'd.

Pemb. Marry'd ! who ?——Damnation !

Gar. Lord Guilford Dudley and the Lady Jane.

Pemb. Curse on my stars !

Gar. Nay, in the name of grace

Restrain this sinful passion : all's not lost

In this one single woman.

Pemb. I have lost

More than the female world can give me back :

I had beheld ev'n her whole sex unmov'd,

Look'd o'er 'em like a bed of gaudy flow'rs

That lift their painted heads and live a day,

'Then shed their trifling glories unregarded ;

My heart disdain'd their beauties, till she came

With ev'ry grace that Nature's hand could give,

And with a mind so great it spoke its essence

Immortal and divine.

Gar. She was a wonder ;

Detraction must allow that.

Pemb. " The virtuous came,

" Sorted in gentle fellowship, to crown her,

" As if they meant to mend each other's work.

" Candour with goodness, fortitude with sweetness,

" Strict piety, and love of truth, with learning

" More than the schools of Athens ever knew

" Or her own Plato taught. A wonder, Winchester ! "

Thou know'st not what she was, nor can I speak her,

More than to say she was that only blessing

My soul was set upon, and I have lost her.

Gar. Your state is not so bad as you wou'd make it,
Nor need you thus abandon ev'ry hope.

Pemb. Ha! Wot thou save me, snatch me from despair,
And bid me live again?

Gar. She may be your's.
Suppose her husband die.

Pemb. O vain, vain hope!

Gar. Marry, I do not hold that hope so vain.
These Gospellers have had their golden days,
And lorded it at will, with proud despite
Have trodden down our holy Roman faith,
Ransack'd our shrines, and driv'n her saints to exile;
But if my divination fail me not
Their haughty hearts shall be abas'd ere long,
And feel the vengeance of our Mary's reign.

Pemb. And wouldst thou have my fierce impatience stay?
Bid me lie bound upon a rack, and wait
For distant joys, whole ages yet behind?
Can love attend on politicians' schemes,
Expect the slow events of cautious counsels,
Cold unresolving heads and creeping time?

Gar. To-day, or I am ill-inform'd, Northumberland,
With easy Suffolk, Guilford, and the rest,
Meet here in council on some deep design,
Some traiterous contrivance, to protect
Their upstart faith from near approaching ruin:
But there are punishments—halters and axes
For traitors, and consuming flames for hereticks:
The happy bridegroom may be yet cut short
Ev'n in his highest hope—But go not you,
Howe'er the fawning fire old Dudley court you;
No, by the holy rood I charge you mix not
With their pernicious counsels—Mischief waits 'em,
Sure, certain, unavoidable destruction.

Pemb. Ha; join with them! the cursed Dudley's race,
Who while they held me in their arms betray'd me,
Scorn'd me for not suspecting they were villains,
And made a mock'ry of my easy friendship!
No, when I do dishonour be my portion,
“And swift perdition catch me—Join with them!”

Gar. I wou'd not have you—Hie you to the city,
And join with these that love our ancient faith.

Gather your friends about you, and be ready
 T' assert our zealous Mary's royal title,
 And doubt not but her grateful hand shall give you
 To see your soul's desire upon your enemies:
 The church shall pour her ample treasures forth too,
 And pay you with ten thousand years of pardon.

Pemb. No; keep your blessings back, and give me ven-
 Give me to tell that soft deceiver Guilford, [geance:
 Thus, traitor, hast thou done, thus hast thou wrong'd me,
 And thus thy treason finds a just reward.

Gar. But soft! no more! the Lords o' the Council come,
 Ha! by the mass the bride and bridegroom too!
 Retire with me my Lord: we must not meet 'em.

Pemb. 'Tis they themselves, the cursed happy pair!
 Haste, Winchester, haste! let us fly for ever,
 And drive her from my very thoughts if possible.
 "Oh! love, what have I lost! Oh! rev'rend Lord,
 "Pity this fond this foolish weakness in me!
 "Methinks I go like our first wretched father,
 "When from his blissful garden he was driv'n;
 "Like me he went despairing, and like me
 "Thus at the gate stopt short for one last view;
 "Then with the cheerless partner of his wo
 "He turn'd him to the world that lay below,
 "There for his Eden's happy plains beheld
 "A barren wild uncomfortable field;
 "He saw 't was vain the ruin to deplore,
 "He try'd to give the sad remembrance o'er,
 "The sad remembrance still return'd again,
 "And his lost Paradise renew'd his pain."

[*Exeunt Pembroke and Gardiner.*

Enter Lord GUILFORD and Lady JANE.

Guil. What shall I say to thee! what pow'r divine
 Will teach my tongue to tell thee what I feel,
 To pour the transports of my bosom forth,
 And make thee partner of the joy dwells there?
 "For thou art comfortless, full of affliction,
 "Heavy of heart as the forsaken widow,
 "And desolate as orphans." Oh my fair one!
 Thy Edward shines amongst the brightest stars,
 And yet thy sorrows seek him in the grave.

L. J. G. Alas, my dearest Lord! a thousand griefs

Beset my anxious heart; and yet, as if
 The burthen were too little, I have added
 The weight of all thy cares, and, like the miser,
 Increase of wealth has made me but more wretched.
 "The morning light seems not to rise as usual,
 "It draws not to me like my virgin days,
 "But brings new thoughts and other fears upon me:"
 I tremble, and my anxious heart is pain'd
 Left aught but good shou'd happen to my Guilford.

Guil. Nothing but good can happen to thy Guilford.
 While thou art by his side, his better angel,
 His blessing and his guard.

L. J. G. Why came we hither?
 "Why was I drawn to this unlucky place,
 "This Tow'r, so often stain'd with royal blood?
 "Here the fourth Edward's helpless sons were murder'd,
 "And pious Henry fell by ruthless Glo'ster.
 "Is this the place allotted for rejoicing,
 "The bow'r adorn'd to keep our nuptial feast in?
 "Methinks Suspicion and Distrust dwell here,
 "Staring with meagre forms thro' grated windows,
 "Death lurks within, and unrelenting Punishment,
 "Without grim Danger, Fear, and fiercest Pow'r
 "Sit on the rude old tow'rs and Gothick battlements,
 "While Horror overlooks the dreadful wall,
 "And frowns on all around.

Guil. "In safety here
 "The Lords o' th' Council have this morn decreed:
 "To meet, and with united care support
 "The feeble tott'ring state." To thee, my Princess,
 Whose royal veins are rich in Henry's blood,
 With one consent the noblest heads are bow'd;
 From thee they ask a sanction to their counsels,
 And from thy healing hand expect a cure.
 For England's loss in Edward.

L. J. G. How! from me!
 Alas! my Lord—But sure thou mean'st to mock me?

Guil. No, by the love my faithful heart is full of!
 But see, thy mother, gracious Suffolk, comes
 To intercept my story: she shall tell thee,
 For in her look I read the lab'ring thought,
 What vast event thy Fate is now disclosing.

Enter the Dukes of SUFFOLK.

Duch. Suff. No more complain, indulge thy tears no
Thy pious grief has giv'n the grave its due; [more,
"Let thy heart kindle with the highest hopes,
"Expand thy bosom, let thy soul enlarg'd"
Make room to entertain the coming glory!
For Majesty and purple Greatness court thee,
Homage and low Subjection wait: a crown,
"That makes the princes of the earth like gods,"
A crown, my daughter, England's crown, attends
To bind thy brows with its imperial wreath.

L. J. G. Amazement chills my veins! What says my mother?

Duch. Suff. 'Tis Heav'n's decree; for our expiring Ed-
When now just struggling to his native skies, [ward,
Ev'n on the verge of heav'n, in sight of angels
That hover'd round to waft him to the stars,
Ev'n then declar'd my Jane for his successor.

L. J. G. Cou'd Edward do this? cou'd the dying saint
Bequeath his crown to me? Oh fatal bounty!
To me! but 'tis impossible! "We dream;
"A thousand and a thousand bars oppose me,
"Rise in my way and intercept my passage:
"Ev'n you, my gracious mother, what must you be
"Ere I can be a queen?

Duch. Suff. "That, and that only,
"Thy mother; fonder of that tender name
"Than all the proud additions Pow'r can give.
"Yes, I will give up all my share of greatness,
"And live in low obscurity for ever,
"To see thee rais'd, thou darling of my heart,
"And fix'd upon a throne." But see, thy father
Northumberland, with all the Council, come
To pay their vow'd allegiance at thy feet,
To kneel and call thee Queen.

L. J. G. Support me Guilford;
Give me thy aid; stay thou my fainting soul,
And help me to repress this growing danger.

*Enter SUFFOLK, NORTHUMBERLAND, Lords and others of
the Privy Council.*

North. Hail, sacred Princess! sprung from ancient kings,
Our England's dearest hope, undoubted offspring

Of York and Lancaster's united line,
 " By whose bright zeal, by whose victorious faith,
 " Guarded and fenc'd around, our pure religion,
 " That lamp of truth which shines upon our altars,
 " Shall lift its golden head and flourish long,
 " Beneath whose awful rule and righteous sceptre
 " The plenteous years shall roll in long succession,
 " Law shall prevail, and ancient right take place,
 " Fair Liberty shall lift her cheerful head
 " Fearless of tyranny and proud oppression,
 " No sad complaining in our streets shall cry,
 " But justice shall be exercis'd in mercy."
 Hail, royal Jane! behold we bend our knees,

[They kneel.]

The pledge of homage and thy land's obedience;
 With humblest duty thus we kneel, and own thee
 Our Liege our sov'reign Lady and our Queen.

L. J. G. Oh rise!

My father, rise!

[To Suz.]

And you my father too!

[To North:]

Rise all, nor cover me with this confusion.

[They rise:]

What means this mock, this masking shew of greatness?

Why do you hang these pageant glories on me,

And dress me up in honours not my own?

North. The daughters of our late great master Henry

Stand both by law excluded from succession.

To make all firm,

And fix a pow'r unquestion'd in your hand,

Edward by will bequeath'd his crown to you,

And the concurring Lords in council met

Have ratify'd the gift.

L. J. G. Are crowns and empire,

" The government and safety of mankind,"

Trifles of such light moment to be left

Like some rich toy, " a ring or fancy'd gem,"

The pledge of parting friends? Can kings do thus,

And give away a people for a legacy?

North. Forgive me, princely Lady, if my wonder

Seizes each sense, each faculty of mind,

To see the utmost wish the great can form,

A crown, thus coldly met; a crown which, slighted

And left in scorn by you, shall soon be sought,

And find a joyful wearer, one perhaps
Of blood unkindred to your royal house,
And fix its glories in another line.

L. J. G. Where art thou now, thou partner of my
cares? *[Turning to Guilford.]*

"Come to my aid, and help to bear this burthen:

"Oh! save me from this sorrow, this misfortune,

"Which in the shape of gorgeous Greatness comes

"To crown and make a wretch of me for ever.

Guil. "Thou weep'st my queen, and hang'st thy drooping
head

"Like nodding poppies heavy with the rain,

"That bow their weary necks and bend to earth."

See, by thy side thy faithful Guilford stands,

Prepar'd to keep distress and danger from thee,

To wear thy sacred cause upon his sword,

And war against the world in thy defence.

North. Oh! "stay this inauspicious stream of tears,

"And cheer your people with one gracious smile.

"Nor comes your fate in such a dreadful form

"To bid you shun it. Turn those sacred eyes

"On the bright prospect empire spreads before you."

Methinks I see you seated on the throne,

"Beneath your feet the kingdom's great degrees

"In bright confusion shine, mitres and coronets,

"The various ermine and the glowing purple,"

Assembled senates wait with awful dread

To firm your high commands and make 'em fate.

L. J. G. You turn to view the painted side of royalty,
And cover all the cares that lurk beneath.

Is it to be a queen to sit aloft

In solemn dull uncomfortable state,

The flatter'd idol of a servile court?

Is it to draw a pompous train along,

A pageant for the wond'ring crowd to gaze at?

"Is it in wantonness of pow'r to reign,

"And make the world subservient to my pleasure?

"Is it not rather to be greatly wretched,

"To watch, to toil, to take a sacred charge,

"To bend each day before high Heav'n, and own

"This people hast thou trusted to my hand,

"And at my hand I know thou shalt require 'em?"

Alas, Northumberland!—my father!—is it not
 To live a life of care, and when I die
 Have more to answer for before my Judge
 Than any of my subjects?

Duch. Suff. “Ev’ry state
 “Allotted to the race of man below
 “Is in proportion doom’d to taste some sorrow,
 “Nor is the golden wreath on a king’s brow
 “Exempt from care; and yet who would not bear it?
 “Think on the monarchs of our royal race,
 “They liv’d not for themselves: how many blessings,
 “How many lifted hands, shall pay thy toil,
 “If for thy people’s good thou haply borrow
 “Some portion from the hours of rest, and wake
 “To give the world repose!”

Suf. Behold, we stand upon the brink of ruin,
 And only thou canst save us. Persecution,
 The fiend of Rome and hell, prepares her tortures;
 See where she comes in Mary’s priestly train!
 Still wot thou doubt, till thou behold her stalk
 Red with the blood of martyrs, and wide wasting
 O’er England’s bosom? “All the mourning year
 “Our towns shall glow with unextinguish’d fires,
 “Our youth on racks shall stretch their crackling bones,
 “Our babes shall sprawl on consecrated spears,
 “Matrons and husbands, with their newborn infants,
 “Shall burn promiscuous; a continu’d peal
 “Of lamentations, groans, and shrieks, shall sound
 “Thro’ all our purple ways.”

Guil. Amidst that ruin
 Think thou behold’st thy Guilford’s head laid low,
 Bloody and pale——

L. J. G. Oh! spare the dreadful image!

Guil. Oh! wou’d the misery be bounded there
 My life were little; but the rage of Rome
 Demands whole hecatombs, a land of victims.
 “With superstition comes that other fiend,
 “That bane of peace, of arts and virtue, Tyranny,
 “That foe of justice, scorner of all law,
 “That beast which thinks mankind were born for one,
 “And made by Heav’n to be a monster’s prey,
 “That heaviest curse of groaning nations, tyranny.”

Mary shall by her kindred Spain be taught
To bend our necks beneath a brazen yoke,
And rule o'er wretches with an iron sceptre.

L. J. G. Avert that judgment Heav'n!
Whate'er thy Providence allots for me
In mercy spare my country.

Guil. Oh my queen!

Does not thy great thy generous heart relent
To think this land, for liberty so fam'd,
Shall have her tow'ry front at once laid low,
And robb'd of all its glory? "Oh my country!
"Oh! fairest Albion! empress of the deep,
"How have thy noblest sons with stubborn valour
"Stood to the last, dy'd many a field in blood,
"In dear defence of birthright and their laws!
"And shall those hands which fought the cause of freedom
"Be manacled in base unworthy bonds,
"Be tamely yielded up, the spoil, the slaves,
"Of hairbrain'd Zeal and cruel coward priests?"

L. J. G. Yes, my lov'd Lord, my soul is mov'd like thine
At ev'ry danger which invades our England;
My cold heart kindles at the great occasion,
And cou'd be more than man in her defence:
But where is my commission to redress?
Or whence my pow'r to save? Can Edward's will,
Or twenty met in council, make a queen?
Can you, my Lords, give me the pow'r to canvass
A doubtful title with king Henry's daughters?
Where are the rev'rend sages of the law
To guide me with their wisdoms, and point out
The paths which right and justice bid me tread?

North. The Judges all attend, and will at leisure
Resolve you ev'ry scruple.

L. J. G. They expound;
But where are those, my Lord, that make the law?
Where are the ancient honours of the realm,
The nobles with the mitred fathers join'd?
The wealthy commons solemnly assembled?
Where is that voice of a consenting people
To pledge the universal faith with mine,
And call me justly Queen?

North. "Nor shall that long

" Be wanting to your wish. The Lords and Commons
 " Shall at your royal bidding soon assemble,
 " And with united homage own your title :
 " Delay not then to meet the general wish,
 " But be our queen, be England's better angel ;
 " Nor let mistaken piety betray you
 " To join with cruel Mary in our ruin :
 " Her bloody faith commands her to destroy,
 " And your's enjoins to save.

Guil. Our foes, already
 High in their hopes, devote us all to death :
 " The dronish monks, the scorn and shame of manhood,
 " Rouse and prepare once more to take possession,
 " To nestle in their ancient hives again ;
 " Again they furbish up their holy trumpery,
 " Relicks and wooden wonder-working saints,
 " Whole loads of lumber and religious rubbish,
 " In high procession mean to bring them back,
 " And place the puppets in their shrines again ;
 " While those of keener malice, savage Bonner,
 " And deep-designing Gard'ner, dream of vengeance,
 " Devour the blood of innocents in hope,
 " Like vultures snuff the slaughter in the wind,
 " And speed their flight to havock and the prey."
 Haste then and save us, while 't is giv'n to save
 Your country, your religion.

North. Save your friends !

Suf. Your father !

Duch. Suf. Mother !

Guil. Husband !

L. J. G. Take me, crown me,
 Invest me with this royal wretchedness ;
 Let me not know one happy minute more ;
 Let all my sleepless nights be spent in care,
 My days be vex'd with tumults and alarms ;
 If only I can save you, if my fate
 Has mark'd me out to be the publick victim,
 I take the lot with joy. Yes, I will die
 For that eternal truth my faith is fix'd on,
 And that dear native land which gave me birth.

Guil. Wake ev'ry tuneful instrument to tell it,
 And let the trumpet's sprightly note proclaim

My Jane is England's queen! "Let the loud cannon
 "In peals of thunder speak it to Augusta;
 "Imperial Thames, catch thou the sacred sound,
 "And roll it to the subject ocean down:
 "Tell the old deep and all thy brother floods
 "My Jane is empress of the wat'ry world!
 "Now with glad fires our bloodless streets shall shine,
 "With cries of joy our cheerful ways shall ring,"
 Thy name shall echo thro' the rescu'd isle,
 And reach applauding heav'n!

L. J. G. Oh Guilford! what do we give up for glory!
 For glory! that's a toy I would not purchase,
 An idle empty bubble: but for England!
 What must we lose for that! Since then my Fate
 Has forc'd this hard exchange upon my will
 Let gracious Heav'n allow me one request:
 For that blest peace in which I once did dwell,
 "For books, retirement, and my studious cell,
 "For all those joys my happier days did prove,
 "For Plato and his Academick grove,"
 All that I ask is, tho' my Fortune frown,
 And bury me beneath this fatal crown,
 Let that one good be added to my doom,
 To save this land from tyranny and Rome. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE continues.

Enter PEMBROKE and GARDINER.

GARDINER.

IN an unlucky and accursed hour
 Set forth that traitor duke, that proud Northumberland,
 "To draw his sword upon the side of herefy,
 "And war against our Mary's royal right:
 "Ill Fortune fly before, and pave his way
 "With disappointments, mischief, and defeat:"
 Do thou, O holy Becket, the protector,
 The champion, and the martyr of our church,
 Appear, and once more own the cause of Rome;

Beat down his lance, break thou his sword in battle,
And cover foul rebellion with confusion.

Pemb. I saw him marching at his army's head ;
I mark'd him issuing thro' the City-gate
In harness all appointed as he pass'd,
And (for he wore his beaver up) cou'd read
Upon his visage horror and dismay.
No voice of cheerful salutation cheer'd him,
None wish'd his arms might thrive, or bad God speed him,
But thro' a staring ghastly-looking crowd,
Unhail'd, unblest'd, with heavy heart he went,
As if his traitor father's haggard ghost,
And Somerset fresh bleeding from the axe,
On either hand had usher'd him to ruin.

Gar. Nor shall the holy vengeance loiter long.
At Farmingham in Suffolk lies the Queen,
Mary, our pious mistress, where each day
The nobles of the land and swarming populace
Gather, and list beneath her royal ensigns.
The fleet, commanded by Sir Thomas Jerningham,
Set out in warlike manner to oppose her,
With one consent have join'd to own her cause ;
The valiant Suffex and Sir Edward Hastings,
With many more of note, are up in arms,
And all declare for her.

Pemb. " The citizens,
" Who held the noble Somerset right dear,
" Hate this aspiring Dudley and his race,
" And wou'd upon the instant join t' oppose him,
" Could we but draw some of the Lords o' th' Council
" T' appear among 'em, own the same design,
" And bring the rev'rend sanction of authority
" To lead 'em into action. For that purpose.
" To thee, as to an oracle, I come,
" To learn what fit expedient may be found
" To win the wary Council to our side :
" Say thou, whose head is grown thus silver-white
" In arts of government and turns of state,
" How may we blast our enemies with ruin,
" And sink the curs'd Northumberland to hell ?

Gar. " In happy time be your whole wish accomplish'd.
" Since the proud duke set out I have had conference,

" As fit occasion serv'd, with divers of 'em,
 " The Earl of Arundel, Mafon, and Cheyney,
 " And find 'em all dispos'd as we cou'd ask.
 " By holy Mary, if I count aright,
 " To-day the better part shall leave this place,
 " And meet at Baynard's Castle in the City,
 " There own our sov'reign's title, and defy
 " Jane and her Gospel crew. But hie you hence!
 " This place is still within our foes' command;
 " Their puppet-queen reigns here."

Enter an Officer with a Guard.

Off. Seize on 'em both. [*Guards seize Pemb. and Gar.*
 My Lord, you are a pris'ner to the state.

Pemb. Ha! by whose order?

Off. By the Queen's command,
 Sign'd and deliver'd by Lord Guilford Dudley.

Pemb. Curse on his traitor's heart!

Gar. Rest you contented;
 You have loiter'd here too long; but use your patience;
 These bonds shall not be lasting.

Off. As for you Sir, [*To Gardiner.*
 'Tis the Queen's pleasure you be close confin'd;
 You 'ave us'd that fair permission was allow'd you
 To walk at large within the Tower unworthily:
 You're noted for an over-busy meddler,
 A secret practiser against the state,
 For which henceforth your limits shall be straiter.
 Hence, to your chamber.

Gar. Farewell, gentle Pembroke,
 I trust that we shall meet on blither terms;
 Till then amongst my beads I will remember you,
 And give you to the keeping of the saints.

[*Exeunt part of the Guards with Gardiner.*

Pemb. Now, whither must I go?

Off. This way my Lord. [*Going off.*

Enter GUILFORD.

Guil. Hold Captain! ere you go; I have a word or two
 For this your noble pris'ner.

Off. At your pleasure:
 I know my duty, and attend your Lordship.

[*The Officer and Guards retire to the farthest part of the stage.*

Guil. Is all the gentleness that was betwixt us

So lost, so swept away from thy remembrance,
Thou canst not look upon me?

Pemb. Ha! not look!

What terrors are there in the Dudley's race
That Pembroke dares not look upon and scorn?
And yet 'tis true I wou'd not look upon thee:
Our eyes avoid to look on what we hate
As well as what we fear.

Guil. You hate me then!

Pemb. I do, and wish perdition may o'ertake
Thy father, thy false self, and thy whole name.

Guil. And yet as sure as rage disturbs thy reason,
And masters all the noble nature in thee,
As sure as thou hast wrong'd me, I am come
In tenderness of friendship to preserve thee,
To plant ev'n all the pow'r I have before thee,
And fence thee from destruction with my life.

Pemb. Friendship from thee! but my just soul disdains
Hence! take the prostituted bawble back, [thee.
"Hang it to grace some flavinging idiot's neck,
"For none but fools will praise the tinsel toy."
But thou art come perhaps to vaunt thy greatness,
And set thy purple pomp to view before me,
To let me know that Guilford is a king,
That he can speak the word and give me freedom.
Oh shortliv'd pageant! hadst thou all the pow'r
Which thy vain soul wou'd grasp at I would die,
Rot in a dungeon, ere receive a grace,
The least the meanest courtesy, from thee.

Guil. Oh Pembroke! but I have not time to talk,
For danger presses; danger unforeseen,
And secret as the shaft that flies by night,
Is aiming at thy life. Captain, a word! [To the Officer.
I take your pris'ner to my proper charge;
Draw off your guard, and leave his sword with me.
[The Officer delivers the sword to Lord Guilford, and goes
out with his Guard.

Lord Guilford offering the sword to Pembroke.
Receive this gift ev'n from a rival's hand;
And if thy rage will suffer thee to hear
The counsel of a man once call'd thy friend,
Fly from this fatal place and seek thy safety.

Pemb. How now! what shew what mockery is this?
“Is it in sport you use me thus? What means
“This swift fantastick changing of the scene?
‘*Guil.* Oh, take thy sword, and let thy valiant hand
Be ready arm’d to guard thy noble life:
The time, the danger, and the wild impatience,
Forbid me all to enter into speech with thee,
Or I cou’d tell thee——

Pemb. No, it needs not, traitor!
For all thy poor thy little arts are known.
Thou fear’st my vengeance, and art come to fawn,
To make a merit of that proffer’d freedom,
Which in despite of thee a day shall give me.
Nor can my fate depend on thee false Guilford,
For know to thy confusion, ere the sun
Twice gild the east our royal Mary comes
To end thy pageant reign and set me free.

Guil. Ungrateful and unjust! hast thou then known me
So little to accuse my heart of fear?
Hast thou forgotten Muffelborough’s field?
Did I then fear, when by thy side I fought,
And dy’d my maiden sword in Scottish blood?
But this is madness all.

Pemb. Give me my sword. [Taking his sword.
Perhaps indeed I wrong thee: thou hast thought,
And conscious of the inj’ry thou hast done me
Art come to proffer me a soldier’s justice,
And meet my arm in single opposition:
Lead then, and let me follow to the field.

Guil. Yes, Pembroke, thou shalt satisfy thy vengeance,
And write thy bloody purpose on my bosom:
But let Death wait to-day. By our past friendship,
In honour’s name, by ev’ry sacred tie,
I beg thee ask no more, but haste from hence.

Pemb. What mystick meaning lurks beneath thy words?
What fear is this which thou wou’dst awe my soul with?
Is there a danger Pembroke dares not meet?

Guil. Oh, spare my tongue a tale of guilt and horror!
Trust me this once; believe me when I tell thee
Thy safety and thy life is all I seek.

Away.

Pemb. “By Heav’n I wo’nt stir a step.”

Curse on this shuffling, dark, ambiguous, phrase.
If thou wou'dst have me think thou mean'st me fairly,
Speak with that plainness honesty delights in,
And let thy double tongue for once be true.

Guil. Forgive me, filial piety and nature,
If thus compell'd I break your sacred laws,
Reveal my father's crime, and blot with infamy
The hoary head of him who gave me being,
To save the man whom my soul loves from death.

[Giving a paper.

Read there the fatal purpose of thy foe,
A thought which wounds my soul with shame and horror!
Somewhat that darkness should have hid for ever,
But that thy life—Say, hast thou seen that character?

Pemb. I know it well; the hand of proud Northumber-
Directed to his minions Gates and Palmer. [land,
What's this? [Reads.

“Remember with your closest care to observe those
“whom I nam'd to you at parting, especially keep your
“eye upon the Earl of Pembroke; as his power and in-
“terest are most considerable, so his opposition will be most
“fatal to us. Remember the resolution was taken if you
“should find him inclined to our enemies. The forms of
“justice are tedious, and delays are dangerous. If he fal-
“ters, lose not the sight of him till your daggers have
“reached his heart.”

My heart! oh murd'rous villain!

Guil. Since he parted
Thy ways have all been watch'd, thy steps been mark'd,
Thy secret treaties with the malcontents
That harbour in the City, thy conferring
With Gard'ner here in the Tow'r, all is known,
And in pursuance of that bloody mandate
A set of chosen ruffians wait to end thee:
There was but one way left me to preserve thee;
I took it, and this morning sent my warrant
To seize upon thy person—But begone!

Pemb. 'Tis so—'t is truth—I see his honest heart——

Guil. I have a friend of well try'd faith and courage,
Who with a fit disguise and arms conceal'd
Attends without to guide thee hence with safety.

Pemb. What is Northumberland? and what art thou?

Guil. Waste not the time; away!

Pemb. Here let me fix,

And gaze with everlasting wonder on thee.
What is there good or excellent in man
That is not found in thee? Thy virtues flash,
They break at once on my astonish'd soul,
"As if the curtains of the dark were drawn
"To let in day at midnight.

Guil. "Think me true;

"And tho' ill fortune cross'd upon our friendship——

Pemb. "Curse on our fortune!—Think I know thee

Guil. For ever I could hear thee—but thy life. [honest.]"

Oh Pembroke! linger not——

Pemb. And can I leave thee

Ere I have clasp'd thee in my eager arms,
And giv'n thee back my sad repenting heart?
Believe me, Guilford, like the Patriarch's dove, [*Embracing.*
It wander'd forth, but found no resting place
Till it came home again to lodge with thee.

Guil. What is there that my soul can more desire
Than these dear marks of thy returning friendship?
The danger comes—If you stay longer here
You die, my Pembroke.

Pemb. Let me stay and die,

For if I go I go to work thy ruin.

Thou know'st not what a foe thou send'st me forth,
That I have sworn destruction to the Queen,
And pledg'd my faith to Mary and her cause:
My honour is at stake.

Guil. I know 'tis given:

But go—the stronger thy engagements there
The more's thy danger here. "There is a Pow'r

"Who sits above the stars, in him I trust:

"All that I have his bounteous hand bestow'd;

"And he that gave it can preserve it to me.

"If his o'erruling will ordains my ruin

"What is there more but to fall down before him,

"And humbly yield obedience?"—Fly! begone!

Pemb. Yes, I will go—for see! behold who comes!

Oh Guilford! hide me, shield me from her sight;

Ev'ry mad passion kindles up again,

Love, rage, despair—and yet I will be master—

I will remember thee—Oh my torn heart!

I have a thousand thousand things to say,

But cannot, dare not stay to look on her.

"Thus gloomy ghosts, where'er the breaking morn

"Gives notice of the cheerful sun's return,

"Fade at the light, with horror stand oppress'd,

"And shrink before the purple dawning east,

"Swift with the fleeting shades they wing their way,

"And dread the brightness of the rising day."

[*Exeunt Guilford and Pembroke.*

Enter Lady JANE reading.

L. J. G. "'Tis false! the thinking soul is somewhat more

"Than symmetry of atoms well dispos'd,

"The harmony of matter; farewell else

"The hope of all hereafter, that new life,

"That separate intellect, which must survive

"When this fine frame is moulder'd into dust."

Enter GUILFORD.

Guil. What read'st thou there my Queen?

L. J. G. 'Tis Plato's Phædon,

Where dying Socrates takes leave of life

With such an easy, careless, calm, indifference,

As if the trifle were of no account,

Mean in itself, and only to be worn

In honour of the giver.

Guil. Shall thy soul

Still scorn the world, still fly the joys that court

"Thy blooming beauty and thy tender youth?"

Still shall she soar on contemplation's wing,

And mix with nothing meaner than the stars,

"As Heav'n and immortality alone

"Were objects worthy to employ her faculties?

L. J. G. "Bate but thy truth what is there here below

"Deserves the least regard? Is it not time

"To bid our souls look out, explore hereafter,

"And seek some better sure abiding place,

"When all around our gath'ring foes come on,

"To drive to sweep us from this world at once?"

Guil. "Does any danger new?"——

L. J. G. The faithless Counsellors

Are fled from hence to join the Princess Mary,

The servile herd of courtiers, who so late

In low obedience bent the knee before me ;
 They who with zealous tongues and hands uplifted
 Besought me to defend their laws and faith,
 Vent their lewd execrations on my name,
 Proclaim me trait'ers now, and to the scaffold
 Doom my devoted head.

Guil. The changeling villains !
 That pray for slavery, fight for their bonds,
 And shun the blessing Liberty like ruin.
 " What art thou, Human Nature, to do thus ?
 " Does fear or folly make thee, like the Indian,
 " Fall down before this dreadful devil Tyranny,
 " And worship the destroyer ?"

But wherefore do I loiter tamely here ?
 Give me my arms : I will preserve my country
 Ev'n in her own despite. Some friends I have
 Who will or die or conquer in thy cause,
 Thine and religion's, thine and England's cause.

L. J. G. Art thou not all my treasure, all my guard ?
 And wot thou take from me the only joy,
 The last defence, is left me here below ?
 Think not thy arm can stem the driving torrent,
 Or save a people who with blinded rage
 Urge their own fate, and strive to be undone.
 Northumberland, thy father, is in arms,
 And if it be in valour to defend us
 His sword, that long has known the way to conquest,
 Shall be our surest safety.

Enter the Duke of Suffolk.

Suf. Oh, my children !

L. J. G. Alas ! what means my father ?

Suf. Oh, my son !

Thy father, great Northumberland, on whom
 Our dearest hopes were built——

Guil. Ha ! what of him ?

Suf. Is lost, betray'd !

His army, onward as he march'd, shrunk from him,
 Moulder'd away, and melted by his side ;

" Like falling hail thick strewn upon the ground,

" Which ere we can essay to count is vanish'd."

With some few followers he arriv'd at Cambridge,
 But there ev'n they forsook him, and himself
 Was forc'd, with heavy heart and wat'ry eye,

To cast his cap up with dissembled cheer,
 And cry God save Queen Mary. But alas!
 Little avail'd the semblance of that loyalty;
 For soon thereafter by the Earl of Arundel
 With treason he was charg'd, and there arrested,
 And now he brings him pris'ner up to London.

L. J. G. Then there's an end of greatness, the vain dream
 Of empire and a crown that danc'd before me,
 "With all those unsubstantial empty forms,
 "Waiting in idle mockery around us;
 "The gaudy mask, tedious and nothing meaning,"
 Is vanish'd all at once—Why, fare it well!

Guil. And canst thou bear this sudden turn of fate
 With such unshaken temper?

L. J. G. For myself,
 If I could form a wish for Heav'n to grant
 It should have been to rid me of this crown.
 And thou, o'erruling, great, allknowing, Pow'r!
 Thou who discern'st our thoughts, who see'st 'em rising
 And forming in the soul, oh! judge me thou
 If e'er ambition's guilty fires have warmed me,
 If e'er my heart inclined to pride, to pow'r,
 Or join'd in being a queen. I took the sceptre
 To save this land, thy people, and thy altars:
 And now behold I bend my grateful knee [*Kneeling.*
 In humble adoration of that mercy
 Which quits me of the vast unequal task.

Enter the Dukes of Suffolk.

Duch. Suf. Nay, keep that posture still, and let us join,
 Fix all our knees by thine, lift up our hands,
 And seek for help and pity from above,
 For earth and faithless man will give us none.

L. J. G. What is the worst our cruel Fate ordains us?

Duch. Suf. Curs'd be my fatal counsels, curs'd my tongue,
 That pleaded for thy ruin, and persuaded
 Thy guiltless feet to tread the paths of greatness!
 My child—I have undone thee!

L. J. G. Oh, my mother!
 Shou'd I not bear a portion in your sorrows?

Duch. Suf. Alas! thou hast thy own, a double portion.
 Mary is come, and the revolting Londoners,
 Who beat the heav'ns with thy applauded name

Now crowd to meet and hail her as their queen.
 Suffex is enter'd here, commands the Tow'r,
 Has plac'd his guards around, and this sad place,
 So late thy palace, is become our prison.
 I saw him bend his knee to cruel Gard'ner,
 Who freed from his confinement ran to meet him,
 Embrac'd and blest'd him with a hand of blood;
 Each hast'ning moment I expect 'em here
 To seize and pass the doom of death upon us.

Guil. Ha! seiz'd! shalt thou be seiz'd? and shall I stand
 And tamely see thee borne away to death?
 Then blasted be my coward name for ever.
 No I will set myself to guard this spot,
 To which our narrow empire now is shrunk:
 Here I will grow the bulwark of my Queen,
 Nor shall the hand of Violence profane thee
 Until my breast have borne a thousand wounds,
 Till this torn mangled body sink at once
 A heap of purple ruin at thy feet.

L. J. G. And could thy rash distracted rage do thus?
 Draw thy vain sword against an armed multitude,
 "Only to have my poor heart split with horror,
 "To see thee stabb'd and butcher'd here before me?"
 Oh, call thy better nobler courage to thee,
 And let us meet this adverse fate with patience!
 "Greet our insulting foes with equal tempers,
 "With ev'n brows, and souls secure of death;
 "Here stand unmov'd, as once the Roman senate
 "Receiv'd fierce Brennus and the conqu'ring Gauls,
 "Till ev'n the rude Barbarians stood amaz'd
 "At such superiour virtue." Be thyself,
 For see, the trial comes!

Enter SUSSEX, GARDINER, Officers and Soldiers.

Suf. Guards, execute your orders; seize the traitors:
 Here my commission ends. To you, my Lord, [*To Gar.*
 So our great mistress, royal Mary, bids,
 I leave the full disposal of these pris'ners:
 To your wise care the pious Queen commends
 Her sacred self, her crown, and, what's yet more,
 The holy Roman Church, for whose dear safety
 She wills your utmost diligence be shewn
 To bring rebellion to the bar of Justice.

Yet farther to proclaim how much she trusts
In Winchester's deep thought and well try'd faith,
The seal attends to grace those rev'rend hands,
And when I next salute you I must call you
Chief Minister and Chancellor of England.

Gar. Unnumber'd blessings fall upon her head,
My evergracious Lady! to remember
With such full bounty her old humble beadsman!
For these her foes leave me to deal with them.

Suf. The Queen is on her entrance and expects me.
My Lord, farewell.

Gar. Farewell, right noble Suffex;
Commend me to the Queen's grace; say her bidding
Shall be observ'd by her most lowly creature. [*Exit Suf.*
Lieutenant of the Tow'r, take hence your pris'ners:
Be it your care to see 'em kept apart,
That they may hold no commerce with each other.

L. J. G. That stroke was unexpected.

Guil. Wilt thou part us!

Gar. I hold no speech with hereticks and traitors.
Lieutenant, see my orders are obey'd. [*Exit Gar.*

Guil. Inhuman, monstrous, unexampled, cruelty!
Oh tyrant! but the task becomes thee well;
Thy savage temper joys to do Death's office,
To tear the sacred bands of Love asunder,
And part those hands which Heav'n itself hath join'd.

Duch. Suf. To let us waste the little rest of life
Together had been merciful.

Suf. Then it had not
Been done like Winchester.

Guil. Thou standst unmov'd,
Calm temper sits upon thy beauteous brow,
Thy eyes, that flow'd so fast for Edward's loss,
Gaze unconcern'd upon the ruin round thee,
As if thou hadst resolv'd to brave thy fate,
And triumph in the midst of desolation.

"Ha! see, it swells, the liquid crystal rises,
"It starts, in spite of thee—but I will catch it,
"Nor let the earth be wet with dew so rich."

L. J. G. And dost thou think, my Guilford! I can see
My father, mother, and ev'n thee my husband,
Torn from my side without a pang of sorrow?

How art thou thus unknowing in my heart!
Words cannot tell thee what I feel: there is
An agonizing softness busy here

That tugs the strings, that struggles to get loose,
And pour my soul in wailings out before thee.

Guil. Give way, and let the gushing torrent come;
Behold the tears we bring to swell the deluge
Till the flood rise upon the guilty world
And make the ruin common.

L. J. G. Guilford! no;
The time for tender thoughts and soft endearments
Is fled away and gone; joy has forsaken us;
Our hearts have now another part to play;
They must be steel'd with some uncommon fortitude
That fearless we may tread the paths of horror,
And in despite of fortune and our foes
Ev'n in the hour of death be more than conquerors.

Guil. Oh teach me! say, what energy divine
Inspires thy softer sex and tender years
With such unshaken courage?

L. J. G. Truth and innocence;
A conscious knowledge rooted in my heart,
That to have sav'd my country was my duty.
Yes, England, yes, my country! I would save thee,
But Heav'n forbids; Heav'n disallows my weakness,
And to some dear selected hero's hand
Reserves the glory of thy great deliverance.

Lieut. My Lords, my orders——

Guil. See! we must—must part!

L. J. G. Yet surely we shall meet again.

Guil. “Oh! where?”

L. J. G. If not on earth among yon' golden stars,
“Where other suns arise on other earths,
“And happier beings rest on happier seats,
“Where with a reach enlarg'd our soul shall view
“The great Creator's never-ceasing hand
“Pour forth new worlds to all eternity,
“And people the infinity of space.”

Guil. Fain wou'd I cheer my heart with hopes like these,
But my sad thoughts turn ever to the grave,
To that last dwelling whither now we haste,
Where the black shade shall interpose betwixt us,
And veil thee from these longing eyes for ever.

L. J. G. 'Tis true, by those dark paths our journey leads,
 And thro' the vale of death we pass to life:
 But what is there in death to blast our hopes?
 Behold the universal works of nature
 Where life still springs from death. "To us the sun
 "Dies ev'ry night and ev'ry morn revives;
 "The flow'rs, which Winter's icy hand destroy'd,
 "Lift their fair heads and live again in spring."
 Mark with what hopes upon the furrow'd plain
 The careful ploughman casts the pregnant grain;
 There hid, as in a grave, a while it lies,
 Till the revolving season bids it rise,
 "Till nature's genial pow'rs command a birth,
 "And, potent, call it from the teeming earth,"
 Then large increase the bury'd treasures yield,
 And with full harvest crown the plenteous field.
 [*Exeunt severally with Guards.*]

ACT V.

SCENE continues.

Enter GARDINER, as Lord Chancellor, and the LIEUTENANT of the Tower. Servants with lights before 'em.

LIEUTENANT.

GOOD morning to your Lordship: you rise early.

Gar. Nay, by the rood there are too many sleepers;
 Some must stir early or the state shall suffer.

Did you, as yesterday our mandate bad,
 Inform your pris'ners, Lady Jane and Guilford,
 They were to die this day?

Lieut. My Lord, I did.

Gar. 'Tis well. But say, how did your message like 'em.

Lieut. My Lord, they met the summons with a temper
 That shew'd a solemn serious sense of death,
 Mix'd with a noble scorn of all its terrors:
 In short, they heard me with the selfsame patience
 With which they still have borne them in their prison.
 In one request they both concurr'd; each begg'd
 To die before the other.

Gar. That dispose
 As you think fitting.

Licut. The Lord Guilford only
Implor'd another boon, and urg'd it warmly;
That ere he suffer'd he might see his wife,
And take a last farewell.

Gar. That's not much;
That grace may be allow'd him: see you to it.
How goes the morning?

Licut. Not yet four my Lord.

Gar. By ten they meet their fate. Yet one thing more.
You know 't was order'd that the Lady Jane
Shou'd suffer here within the Tow'r. Take care
No crowds may be let in, no maudlin gazers,
To wet their handkerchiefs and make report
How like a saint she ended. Some fit number,
And those too of our friends, were most convenient:
But above all see that good guard be kept:
You know the Queen is lodg'd at present here;
Take care that no disturbance reach her Highness.
And so good-morning good Master Lieutenant.

[*Exit Lieutenant.*]

How now! what light comes here?

Ser. So please your Lordship,
If I mistake not 'tis the Earl of Pembroke.

Gar. Pembroke!—'tis he; what calls him forth thus
Somewhat he seems to bring of high import; [early?
"Some flame uncommon kindles up his soul,
"And flashes forth impetuous at his eyes."

Enter PEMBROKE, a Page with a light before him.
Good-morrow, noble Pembroke! what importunate
And strong necessity breaks on your slumbers,
And rears your youthful head from off your pillow
At this unwholesome hour, "while yet the night
"Lasts in her latter course, and with her raw
"And rheumy damps infest the dusky air?"

Pemb. Oh, rev'rend Winchester! my beating heart
Exults and labours with the joy it bears;
The news I bring shall bless the breaking morn:
"This coming day the sun shall rise more glorious
"Than when his maiden beams first gilded o'er
"The rich immortal greens, the flow'ry plains
"And fragrant bow'rs of Paradise newborn."

Gar. What happiness is this!

Pemb. 'Tis mercy! mercy,

"The mark of Heav'n impress'd on humankind;
 "Mercy, that glads the world, deals joy around;
 "Mercy, that smoothes the dreadful brow of Pow'r,
 -And makes dominion light; mercy, that saves,
 "Binds up the broken heart, and heals despair."

Mary, our royal ever-gracious mistress,
 Has to my services and humblest pray'rs
 Granted the lives of Guilford and his wife;
 Full and free pardon!

Gar. Ha! what said you? Pardon!

But sure you cannot mean it; cou'd not urge
 The Queen to such a rash and ill-tim'd grace?
 What! save the lives of those who wore her crown!
 My Lord! 't is most unweigh'd pernicious counsel,
 And must not be comply'd with.

Pemb. Not comply'd with!

And who shall dare to bar her sacred pleasure
 And stop the stream of mercy?

Gar. That will I,

Who wo' not see her gracious disposition
 Draw to destroy herself.

Pemb. Thy narrow soul

Knows not the godlike glory of forgiving,
 Nor can thy cold thy ruthless heart conceive
 How large the pow'r, how fix'd the empire is,
 Which benefits confer on generous minds:
 "Goodness prevails upon the stubborn foes,
 "And conquers more than ev'n Cæsar's sword did."

Gar. These are romantick, light, vainglorious, dreams.

Have you consider'd well upon the danger?
 How dear to the fond many, and how popular,
 These are whom you would spare? Have you forgót
 When at the bar, before the seat of judgment,
 This Lady Jane, this beauteous trait'refs, stood,
 With what command she charm'd the whole assembly?
 With silent grief the mournful audience sat,
 Fix'd on her face, and list'ning to her pleading:
 Her very judges wrung their hands for pity;
 Their old hearts melted in 'em as she spoke,
 And tears ran down upon their silver beards.
 Ev'n I myself was mov'd, and for a moment

Felt wrath suspended in my doubtful breast,
 And question'd if the voice I heard was mortal.
 But when her tale was done, what loud applause,
 Like bursts of thunder, shook the spacious hall!
 At last; when sore constrain'd, th' unwilling Lords
 Pronounc'd the fatal sentence on her life;
 A peal of groans ran thro' the crowded court
 As ev'ry heart was broken, and the doom,
 Like that which waits the world, were universal.

Pemb. And can that sacred form, that angel's voice,
 Which mov'd the hearts of a rude ruthless crowd,
 Nay, mov'd ev'n thine, now sue in vain for pity?

Gar. Alas! you look on her with lovers' eyes:
 I hear and see thro' reasonable organs,
 Where passion has no part. Come, come, my Lord,
 You have too little of the statesman in you.

Pemb. And you, my Lord, too little of the churchman.
 Is not the sacred purpose of our faith
 Peace and good-will to man? The hallow'd hand
 Ordain'd to bless should know no stain of blood.
 'Tis true I am not practis'd in your politicks;
 'Twas your pernicious counsel led the Queen
 To break her promise with the men of Suffolk,
 To violate, what in a prince should be
 Sacred above the rest, her royal word.

Gar. Yes, and I dare avow it: I advis'd her
 To break thro' all engagements made with hereticks,
 And keep no faith with such a miscreant crew.

Pemb. Where shall we seek for truth when ev'n religion,
 The priestly robe and mitred head, disclaim it?
 "But thus bad men dishonour the best cause."
 I tell thee, Winchester, doctrines like thine
 Have stain'd our holy church with greater infamy
 Than all your eloquence can wipe away:
 Hence 'tis that those who differ from our faith
 Brand us with breach of oaths, with persecution,
 With tyranny o'er conscience, and proclaim
 Our scarlet prelates men that thirst for blood,
 And Christian Rome more cruel than the Pagan.

Gar. Nay, if you rail, farewell. The Queen must be
 Better advis'd than thus to cherish vipers
 Whose mortal stings are arm'd against her life:

But while I hold the seal no pardon passes
For hereticks and traitors. [Exit Gardiner.

Pemb. 'Twas unlucky

To meet and cross upon this froward priest:
But let me lose the thought on't; let me haste,
Pour my glad tidings forth in Guilford's bosom,
And pay him back the life his friendship sav'd. [Exit.

*The SCENE draws, and discovers the Lady JANE kneeling at
her devotion, a light and a book placed on a table before her.*

Enter LIEUTENANT of the Tower, Lord GUILFORD, and
one of Lady JANE'S Women.

Lieut. Let me not press upon your Lordship farther,
But wait your leisure in the antichamber.

Guil. I will not hold you long. [Exit Lieutenant.

Wom. Softly, my Lord,

For yet behold she kneels. "Before the night
"Had reach'd her middle space she left her bed,
"And with a pleasing sober cheerfulness,
"As for her funeral array'd herself
"In those sad solemn weeds: since then her knee
"Has known that posture only, and her eye
"Or fix'd upon the sacred page before her
"Or lifted with her rising hopes to Heav'n."

Guil. See, with what zeal those holy hands are rear'd!

"Mark her vermilion lip with fervour trembling;
"Her spotless bosom swells with sacred ardour,
"And burns with ecstasy and strong devotion;
"Her supplication sweet, her faithful vows,
"Fragrant and pure, and grateful to high Heav'n,
"Like incense from the golden censer rise,
"Or blessed angels minister unseen,
"Catch the soft sounds, and with alternate office
"Spread their ambrosial wings, then mount with joy,
"And waft them upwards to the throne of grace."
But she has ended, and comes forward.

[Lady JANE rises and comes toward the front of the stage.

L. J. G. Ha!

Art thou my Guilford? wherefore dost thou come
To break the settled quiet of my soul?

I mean to part without another pang,
And lay my weary head down full of peace.

Guil. Forgive the fondness of my longing soul,
That melts with tenderness, and leans towards thee,

"Tho' the imperious dreadful voice of Fate-
 "Summon her hence and warn her from the world."
 But if to see thy Guilford give thee pain,
 Would I had dy'd, and never more beheld thee,
 "Tho' my lamenting discontented ghost
 "Had wander'd forth unblest'd by those dear eyes,
 "And wail'd thy loss in Death's eternal shades."

L. J. G. My heart had ended ev'ry earthly care,
 Had offer'd up its pray'rs for thee and England,
 "And fix'd its hopes upon a rock unfailing;"
 While all the little bus'ness that remain'd
 Was but to pass the forms of death and constancy,
 And leave a life become indiff'rent to me:
 But thou has waken'd other thoughts within me;
 Thy sight, my dearest husband and my lord!
 Strikes on the tender strings of love and nature;
 My vanquish'd passions rise again, and tell me
 'Tis more, far more, than death to part from thee.

Enter PEMBROKE.

Pemb. Oh, let me fly, bear me thou swift impatience,
 And lodge me in my faithful Guilford's arms!

[Embracing.]

That I may snatch thee from the greedy grave,
 'That I may warm his gentle heart with joy.
 And talk to him of life, of life and pardon.

Guil. What means my dearest Pembroke!

Pemb. Oh, my speech
 Is chok'd with words that crowd to tell the tidings!
 But I have sav'd thee—and—oh, joy unutterable!
 The Queen, my gracious, my forgiving, mistress,
 Has giv'n not only thee to my request,
 But she, she too, in whom alone thou liv'st,
 The partner of thy heart, thy love is safe.

Guil. Millions of blessings wait her!--Has she--tell me,
 Oh! has she spar'd my wife?

Pemb. Both, both are pardon'd.
 But haste, and do thou lead me to thy saint,
 That I may cast myself beneath her feet,
 And beg her to accept this poor amends
 For all I've done against her—Thou fair excellence.

[Kneeling.]

Canst thou forgive the hostile hand that arm'd
 Against thy cause, and robb'd thee of a crown?

L. J. G. Oh, rise my Lord, and let me take your posture;
Life and the world are hardly worth my care,
But you have reconcil'd me to 'em both;
Then let me pay my gratitude, and for
This free this noble unexpected mercy
Thus low I bow to Heav'n, the Queen, and you.

Pemb. To me! forbid it goodness! if I live
Somewhat I will do shall deserve your thanks.
"All discord and remembrance of offence
"Shall be clean blotted out; and for your freedom
"Myself have undertaken to be your caution."
Hear me, you saints, and aid my pious purpose:
These that deserve so much, this wondrous pair,
Let these be happy; ev'ry joy attend 'em;
A fruitful bed, a chain of love unbroken;
"A good old age, to see their children's children,"
A holy death, and everlasting memory;
"While I resign to them my share of happiness,
"Contented still to want what they enjoy,
"And singly to be wretched."

Enter LIEUTENANT of the Tower.

Lient. The Lord Chancellor
Is come with orders from the Queen.

Enter GARDINER and Attendants.

Pemb. Ha! Winchester!

Gar. The Queen, whose days be many,
By me confirms her first accorded-grace;
But as the pious princess means her mercy
Should reach ev'n to the soul as well as body,
By me she signifies her royal pleasure
That thou, Lord Guilford, and the Lady Jane,
Do instantly renounce, abjure your heresy,
And yield obedience to the See of Rome.

L. J. G. What! turn apostate?

Guil. Ha! forego my faith!

Gar. This one condition only seals your pardon;
But if thro' pride of heart and stubborn obstinacy
With wilful hands you push the blessing from you,
"And shut your eyes against such manifest light,"
Know ye your former sentence stands confirm'd,
And you must die to-day.

Pemb. 'Tis false as hell;

The mercy of the Queen was free and full.
 Think'st thou that princes merchandise their grate
 As Roman priests their pardons? "Do they barter,
 "Screw up, like you, the buyer to a price,
 "And doubly sell what was design'd a gift?"

Gar. My Lord, this language ill befits your nobleness,
 Nor come I here to bandy words with madmen.
 Behold the royal signet of the Queen,
 Which amply speaks her meaning. You, the pris'ners,
 Have heard at large its purport, and must instantly
 Resolve upon the choice of life or death.

Pemb. Curse on—But wherefore do I loiter here?
 I'll to the Queen this moment, and there know
 What 'tis this mischief-making priest intends. [*Exit.*]

Gar. Your wisdom points you out a proper course.
 A word with you Lieutenant.

[*Talks with the Lieutenant aside.*]

Guil. Must we part then?

What are those hopes that flatter'd us but now,
 Those joys that like the spring with all its flow'rs
 Pour'd out their pleasures ev'ry where around us?
 In one poor minute gone; "at once they wither'd,
 "And left their place all desolate behind them."

L. J. G. Such is this foolish world, and such the certainty
 Of all the boasted blessings it bestows:
 Then, Guilford, let us have no more to do with it;
 Think only how to leave it as we ought,
 "But trust no more, and be deceiv'd no more."

Guil. Yes, I will copy thy divine example,
 "And tread the paths are pointed out by thee:"
 By thee instructed, to the fatal block
 I bend my head with joy, and think it happiness
 To give my life a ransom for my faith.

"From thee, thou angel of my heart, I learn
 "That greatest hardest task to part with thee."

L. J. G. Oh, gloriously resolv'd! "Heav'n is my witness
 "My heart rejoices in thee more ev'n now,
 "Thus constant as thou art, in death thou faithful,
 "Than when the holy priest first join'd our hands,
 "And knit the sacred knot of bridal love."

Gar. The day wears fast; Lord Guilford, have you
 Will you lay hold on life? [*thought?*]

Guil. What are the terms?

Gar. Death or the mass attend you.

Guil. 'Tis determin'd:

Lead to the scaffold.

Gar. Bear him to his fate.

Guil. Oh! let me fold thee once more in my arms,
Thou dearest treasure of my heart, and print
A dying husband's kiss upon thy lip!
Shall we not live again ev'n in those forms?
Shall I not gaze upon thee with these eyes?

L. J. G. Oh! wherefore dost thou sooth me with thy
Why dost thou wind thyself about my heart, [softness?
And make this separation painful to us?

"Here break we off at once; and let us now,

"Forgetting ceremony, like two friends

"That have a little bus'ness to be done,

"Take a short leave, and haste to meet again.

Guil. "Rest on that hope my soul—my wife——

L. J. G. "No more."

Guil. My sight hangs on thee—Oh! support me, Heav'n,
In this last pang—and let us meet in bliss!

[*Guilford is led off by the Guards.*

L. J. G. "Can nature bear this stroke?"

Wom. Alas, she faints!

[*Supporting.*

L. J. G. Wot thou fail now—The killing stroke is past,
And all the bitterness of death is o'er.

Gar. Here let the dreadful hand of Vengeance stay.

Have pity on your youth and blooming beauty;

"Cast not away the good which Heav'n bestows;"

Time may have many years in store for you,

All crown'd with fair prosperity. Your husband

Has perish'd in perverseness.

L. J. G. Cease, thou raven,

Nor violate with thy profaner malice

My bleeding Guilford's ghost—'Tis gone, 'tis flown,

But lingers on the wing and waits for me.

[*The scene draws, and discovers a scaffold hung with black,
Executioner and Guards.*

And see, my journey's end.

¹ *Wom.* My dearest lady!

[*Weeping.*

² *Wom.* "Oh, misery!"

L. J. G. Forbear, my gentle maids!

Nor wound my peace with fruitless lamentations;
The good and gracious hand of Providence
Shall raise you better friends than I have been.

Wom. Oh, never, never!——

L. J. G. Help to disarray
And fit me for the block: do this last service,
And do it cheerfully. Now you will see
Your poor unhappy mistress sleep in peace,
And cease from all her sorrows. These few trifles,
The pledges of a dying mistress' love,
Receive and share among you. "Thou, Maria, [*To 1 Wom.*
"Hast been my old my very faithful servant:
"In dear remembrance of thy love I leave thee
"This book, the law of everlasting truth;
"Make it thy treasure still; 't was my support
"When all help else forsook me."

Gar. Will you yet
Repent, be wise, and save your precious life?

L. J. G. Oh Winchester! has learning taught thee that,
To barter truth for life?

Gar. Mistaken folly!
You toil and travel for your own perdition,
And die for damned errors.

L. J. G. Who judge rightly,
And who persists in error, will be known
Then when we meet again. Once more farewell;
[To her Wom.]

Goodness be ever with you. "When I'm dead
"Entreat they do no rude dishonest wrong
"To my cold headless corpse; but see it shrouded,
"And decent laid in earth."

Gar. Wot thou then die?
Thy blood be on thy head.

L. J. G. My blood be where it falls; let the earth hide it;
And may it never rise or call for vengeance.
Oh that it were the last shall fall a victim
To Zeal's inhuman wrath! Thou, gracious Heav'n!
Hear and defend at length thy suff'ring people;
Raise up a monarch of the royal blood,
Brave, pious, equitable, wise, and good;
"In thy due season let the hero come"

“ To save thy altars from the rage of Rome ;
 “ Long let him reign to bless the rescu’d land,”
 And deal out justice with a righteous hand ;
 And when he fails, oh ! may he leave a son
 With equal virtues to adorn his throne,
 To latest times the blessing to convey,
 And guard that faith for which I die to-day.

Lady JANE goes up to the scaffold. The scene closes.

Enter PEMBROKE.

Pemb. Horror on horror ! blasted be the hand
 That struck my Guilford ! oh, his bleeding trunk
 Shall live in these distracted eyes for ever !
 Curse on thy fatal arts, thy cruel counsels ! [To Gar.]
 The Queen is deaf and pitiless as thou art.

Gar. The just reward of heresy and treason
 Is fall’n upon ’em both for their vain obstinacy ;
 Untimely death, with infamy on earth,
 And everlasting punishment hereafter.

Pemb. And canst thou tell ? who gave thee to explore
 The secret purposes of Heav’n, or taught thee
 To set a bound to mercy unconfin’d ?
 But know, thou proud, perversely judging, Winchester,
 Howe’er your hard imperious censures doom,
 And portion out our lot in worlds to come,
 Those who with honest hearts pursue the right,
 And follow faithfully truth’s sacred light,
 Tho’ suff’ring here shall from their sorrows cease,
 Rest with the saints and dwell in endless peace. [Exeunt.]

EPILOGUE.

*THE palms of virtue heroes oft have worn,
 Those wreaths to-night a female brow adorn.
 The destin'd saint, unfortunately brave,
 Sunk with those altars which she strove to save.
 Greatly she dar'd to prop the juster side,
 As greatly with her adverse fate comply'd,
 Did all that Heav'n could ask, resign'd and dy'd;
 Dy'd for the land for which she wish'd to live,
 And gain'd that liberty she could not give.
 Oh happy people of this fav'rite isle,
 On whom so many better angels smile!
 For you kind Heav'n new blessings still supplies,
 Bids other saints and other guardians rise;
 For you the fairest of her sex is come,
 Adopts our Britain and forgets her home;
 For truth and you the heroine declines
 Austria's proud Eagles and the Indian mines.
 What sense of such a bounty can be shewn!
 But Heav'n must make the great reward its own,
 And stars shall join to make her future crown.
 Your gratitude with ease may be express'd;
 Strive but to be, what she would make you, blest'd.
 Let not vile fashion vex the vulgar ear
 With fond surmise and false affected fear;
 Confirm but to yourselves the giv'n good;
 Is all she asks for all she has bestow'd.
 Such was our great example shown to-day,
 And with such thanks our Author's pains repay.
 If from these scenes to guard your faith you learn,
 If for our laws you shew a just concern,
 If you are taught to dread a Popish reign,
 Our beauteous patriot has not dy'd in vain.*

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THE END.



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